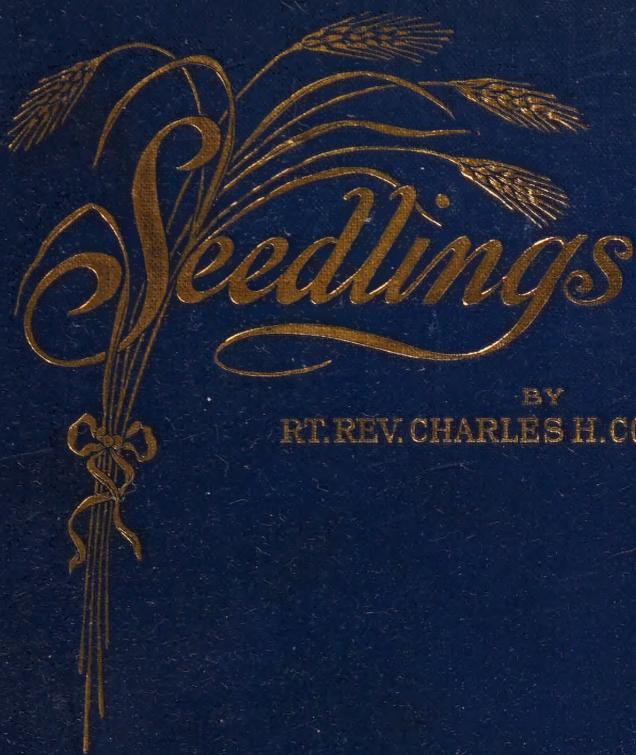




BY
RT. REV. CHARLES H. COLTON, D.D.





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SEEDLINGS



+ Charles,
Bishop of Buffalo.

SEEDLINGS



BY

RIGHT REV. CHARLES H. COLTON, D. D.

BISHOP OF BUFFALO

NEW YORK



"The Seed is the Word of God."

—St. Luke, VIII chap., xi.



1906

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TO THE READER

THE subjects herein treated are familiar to Catholic minds. They are frequently thought of, because constantly alluded to by the voice of Holy Church. They make up in general the round of spiritual reflections and the duties they suggest, which the spirit of the Faith imposes; and any elucidation of them is generally received with favor. Such, at least, has been the writer's experience, as regards the present compilation, and at the kind request of many who read these articles as they appeared in the diocesan paper, he has consented to allow them to be brought out in book-form, that they may re-read them, and any others may read who perchance might wish to peruse them.

This book is called "SEEDLINGS," and may it prove worthy its name. May its sowing bring fruit. May its fruit show that the seedlings are the generation of "*the seed, which is the Word of God.*"

All truth is from God directly or indirectly. Virtue, the fruit of God's word, is disseminated and bears fruit in others by good example,—just as a tree sheds its seeds

on the soil which nurtured it, and reproduces in time others like itself.

In the hope, therefore, of contributing some little to God's glory, and to "the extending of His Kingdom among men," "SEEDLINGS" sheds its seeds upon the world. May they take deep root in the heart of many on the ways in which the zephyrs of God's providence will waft them.

Respectfully,

THE AUTHOR.

Feast of the Annunciation B. V. M., 1906.

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ADVENT

THE season of Advent is to prepare us to worthily celebrate Christmas or the anniversary of our Lord and Saviour's birth. It is penitential and should be kept in a prayerful, recollected and mortified manner. Formerly, much fast was exacted, but now the Church asks only a little. John, as the Gospel tells us, was preaching penance as the fitting preparation for the coming of our Lord; and Holy Church does the same year after year during the holy season of Advent. How important that we comply with the spirit of these days! It is the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, and the kind of year it will be for us will depend on the way we begin it. We prepare to receive our Lord anew, with His birth on Christmas day, to begin well with Him who is our beginning, that He may be our end. "*I am the Alpha and Omega,*" said our Lord,—that is, "I am the beginning and the end." His penitential spirit, His voluntary mortifications and trials, His example, in a word, are to be the model for us. We cannot have a joyful Christmastide unless we be pure, innocent, child-like, loving and confiding in our Lord, and this can only follow after we have grieved for, repented, and made atonement for our sins, and thereby become reconciled with God.

Let our Advent, therefore, be penitential and our Christmas will be joyful beyond all earthly joy.

HAIL, EXPECTED ONE !

WITH Advent come the thoughts it suggests; and as the holy season approaches the great feast for which it is the preparation, the voice of Holy Church enthuses with exultation and she hails the Expected One with most ardent greetings. Let us listen to her words and from our hearts echo her sentiments, as we pray for the realization to us all of her earnest pleadings :

"O Wisdom, come and teach us the way of prudence." Thus the Church asks for us, her children, the gift of wisdom. One needs wisdom to overcome the blindness with which sin has darkened the mind and which causes it to easily err in its judgment. "Be ye wise as serpents," said our Lord, "and simple as doves." But it is only through His grace and blessing we can have this wisdom and prudence. Solomon prayed for it and he received it. So must it ever be prayed for by him who would have it. Our Lord is called the word and the wisdom of the Father, for by Him God speaks to His creature, man, and tells him the saving truths, following which he will be kept from falling into the ways of darkness and error.

"O Adonai! O thou beautiful one! Come and redeem us in thine outstretched arms." It is this thought that hallows the sacred scene of Bethlehem; that the divine Babe will in time reach manhood's years and will then be offered up in sacrifice on the cross for the redemption of mankind. The innocent Lamb will be slaughtered,

yet will make no word of protest, for with all the desire of his loving heart He will gladly shed the last drop of His precious blood in atonement for our sins. The culmination of His infant cries will be the loud cry with which one day He will give up the ghost.

"O root of Jesse! Come and liberate us and make no delay." In this prayer let us all unite. We feel the charms with which the world is striving to enslave us; we feel the power of our passions trying to overcome us, and with a full sense of our inability to cope with these evils, not to mention the need we have to be extricated from the snares which Satan is constantly laying for us, we must call upon the Lord. He freed us on Calvary and He will free us by the merits of that infinite and eternal sacrifice every time we invoke His aid.

"O key of David! and sceptre of the house of Israel! Come and lead us out of prison. Lead us out of darkness and from the shadow of death." What a picture of the sad state of the world as it was for the four thousand years following Adam's fall, and how much we have to be thankful for to our divine Lord for throwing open the prison doors and freeing mankind from the incarceration which God's justice had required. The divine Child brings with Him the keys of heaven and will open the gates to all who will love and serve Him.

"O splendor of eternal light and Sun of Justice! come and shed thy light upon us." It is this light the world needs today, midst the darkness and obscurity which its follies and sins have made for it. From the face of the

divine Child rises the light which will radiate all over the world and be the guide to lead the inquiring mind into the realms of eternal light and glory. "I am the light," said our Lord, "which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world." Let us rejoice in Him our light, and ever follow its rays, as reflected in His grace.

"O King and desired of nations! Come and save man, whom thou hast formed from the slime of the earth." Long was our Lord sighed for, and at length He came—and came as man, remaining God. O mystery of divine power! O mystery of divine love! Thou didst not disdain to take a body that thou might save thy creature and raise him up to the dignity of brother and restore him to his lost birthright as an heir to the kingdom of heaven. It is the message of peace to men of good will that makes the joy of Christmas morn ring down the ages of time.

"O Emmanuel! Come and save us, our God henceforth ever dwelling with us!" How bright the world from that first day when Christ, the Expected One, was born, and the rising of the Sun of Justice has never known a setting—never will. He has been with us ever since and will remain, for "Behold, I am with you all days," said our Lord. This is the joy one feels on a Christmas day, that though the day pass, He that made its joy remains with us still to be the solace of our exile and the stay of our tears.

It is with these tender invocations we are to hail our Lord now and always, but especially on Christmas morn, as we greet Him as the Christ-Child and welcome Him

to our hearts. "When He came," we read, "He came to His own and His own received Him not, but as many as received Him, He gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them who believe in His name." Our Lord makes no distinction now—we are all His own—and He comes to each and every one. Let us give Him our heart, for there He would be born anew to each one, that we may be regenerated and born anew in Him to eternal life. Then will our Christmas joy be real joy, for it will be the beginning of a joy that will never end; for beginning here with Christ, the Prince of Peace, it will bring joy and peace eternal through all the ages of eternity. Then let us swell the chorus of alleluias and hasten to adore Him, our God and King.

ULTIMATE END.

END and cessation, generally speaking, mean the same thing, inasmuch as they both signify that point beyond which nothing extends. The word *end* applied to action means the object toward which it tends, and where it ceases when it attains that object. Therefore *end* can be said to be that on account of which anything is done. End is variously divided: Firstly, into *end which* and *end to whom* or *to which*. These are technical terms, the former signifying the object in view, the latter, the person or thing to be benefitted by it. For example, in study, the *end which* is the attainment of knowledge, and the

end to whom is the student. Secondly, into the *end of the work*, and the *end of the worker*, signifying the end toward which an action tends of itself, and the end intended by the actor, respectively. For example, the end of charity is to help the poor, through itself; but various ends may be intended *by* the one giving charity. A politician often contributes to charitable objects, not always for the good his charity will do toward others, but for the name and favor it will gain for himself. Thirdly and lastly, into *proximate*, *middle* and *ultimate* end. Ultimate, of which there is question now, is the end in which the will rests, all desire or thought of any further end being forgotten. It is divided into *negative* and *positive* end—the former meaning the object toward which anything tends wholly, by its own nature, and the latter signifying that to which a thing partly tends. Ultimate end is again divided into objective and subjective end. Objective is the object toward which the thing acting tends through the action, and the subjective the attainment of the ultimate objective end.

The effects of an end are called those acts which are performed that the end may be obtained. They are the six following: wish, intention to obtain, deliberation as to how, consideration of various means, choice of one particular method, and prosecution of the method chosen. The attainment of the ultimate end is called fruition. There ought to be some ultimate end for man, for man naturally desires happiness; and since God makes nothing in vain, it follows that there must be something in

which that desire will be satisfied. Moreover, this object ought to fill completely all the yearnings of man. In a word, the happiness attained should be perfect, for a tendency always tending and never attaining its object is absurd. And, also, since man in all deliberate acts intends some end, it is right that there be an ultimate, toward which all these lesser ends may flow.

Life requires the principle of activity, either by tending to an end not yet possessed, or by enjoying one already attained. Quiet, which consists of perpetual suspension of every act, and death are the same; but the quiet or peace of mind resulting from the attainment of *the ultimate end*, is not death, but perfect life. End exists for all, but all will not reap its benefits. For end is to be obtained through free acts, and therefore *he* who opposes free acts to the order ordained by God, excludes himself, *ipso facto*, from the attainment of the end. All are able to attain this end, but still all do not attain it.

Having shown the necessity of an ultimate end for man, the question naturally arises as to what this end is. On considering the subject, it is discovered that nothing created can be the ultimate end of man; not riches, because these are merely means to happiness, they are not lasting, and oftentimes burdensome; not honors, because they do not satisfy all man's desires, and, moreover, are not open to all; not pleasures, because, as we know by experience, a continuance in such things turns to our ruin; not even virtue, for *it* tends to happiness, and, therefore, is not happiness itself. Everyone seeks pleas-

ure, because all wish to be happy, but pleasure is merely the result of an end, and not an end itself. It seeks to accomplish something, and, therefore, is not an end, but merely a tendency. All earthly things cannot satisfy man; his better nature, patterned after that of his Creator, soars above the things of earth, wishes to be free and with God, for God alone is the ultimate end of man. The intellect and will of man are only to be satisfied by knowing the highest truth, and by the love of the supreme good, and God being both supreme truth and supreme good, He alone is the ultimate end of man.

Man naturally seeks God, but many lack will to exercise this tendency of their nature. God being omnipotent, can fill the desires of man's will and intellect. He is not the means by which man attains happiness, but He is the object causing happiness. Man cannot comprehend God, for no one is able to consider what is impossible for him to understand. The proportion between God and the intellect is an external form, that is the intellect tends to God, as tending to its own peculiar object. Man cannot attain the ultimate end in this life on account of his body and its passions. These prevent him from contemplating the supreme truth. Nevertheless, man can attain in this life an imperfect happiness, a quiet and peace of mind, sweet and consoling, by pursuing virtue and thereby directing all his efforts to the attaining of the great ultimate end, the possession of God, his Creator, redeemer, and constant friend.

DOMESTIC SOCIETY.

AMONG the various societies which have existence among men, in a philosophical point of view, the most important, the source, in fact, of all the others, is domestic society. This society may be defined as that society formed through the union of man and woman. It is properly denominated "Society," since it is the co-operation of two beings endowed with intelligence to obtain the same end by common means.

In its origin domestic society is to be traced back to God himself. He wishes to propagate the human race; to bring forth multitudes of men to His own glory and their happiness; and as the means of accomplishing His design, He has instituted domestic society. This He desires to be permanent, for otherwise it would be fraught with direful consequences. If stability were lacking, the condition of the offspring would be one of neglect; they would be without food to sustain their bodies and instruction to guide their minds and hearts, and their lot, generally, little better than the lowest animals. Moreover, the mother would suffer if this union were not lasting. Before and after the accomplishment of her holy office, she is weak and helpless. In this state she must depend on her partner for the necessities of life, and if he would fail her, want, and even death, might be the result.

To counteract all this, God has made domestic society permanent by implanting in the breast of man and woman

mutual love, which is strengthened and increased in the love they bear their offspring. This love toward their children is manifested by constant care for their proper education, by nurturing them in their helplessness, and, as they become older, by attention to the forming of their character.

Thus it will be seen that the family may be termed a society, and, philosophically speaking, a moral person, having true authority, and also that it has been instituted by God himself.

Although God wills and has Himself instituted matrimony, He has not commanded that all embrace that state. He has left man free, well knowing that there would be no danger whatever of the human species becoming extinct by an overplus of individuals leading single lives, because, and as experience teaches us, the greater part of mankind enters matrimony.

This state is necessary for the human race, but not for single individuals, since propagation will not cease thereby, and since single individuals can attain their ultimate end without it. But some say that all should embrace the married state. These should consider that many through poverty are unable to support themselves, let alone a family. It is a wise axiom "never to marry until you are able to support a wife."

Again, some declare in condemnation of celibacy, the strength and pride of our Holy Church, that it is impossible to restrain one's passions. Alas, for these, they have but a low opinion of man. Let us hope their asser-

tion is founded in their imaginations only, and not in sad personal experience. Man is not a beast. He has reason. He has will. If he employs these weapons he will overcome all his passions, and be a true man. As a last resort, some will urge that virginity is injurious to the health of man. But here again is falsity. Numbers, whose whole lives have been marked by strict observance of virginity, have reached a good old age. In the eyes of God, virginity holds a high place of honor. His Church commends it, enjoins it on her priests and religious, and demands for it the respect of all the laity. Finally, St. Paul says that virginity is preferable to marriage, from which and all else that has been said, it must certainly be admitted that marriage is binding on the human race only collectively, not individually.

The nature of domestic society is such that it excludes all multiplicity of wives or husbands, either simultaneously or successively; that is to say, no man may have more wives than one at one time, no woman more husbands than one at one time. Death alone can break the tie of union. Therefore, it follows that polygamy is against the spirit of domestic society, while polyandry is against all nature, and merits the horror and detestation of all. The former is opposed to matrimony since it does not permit of mutual love, so necessary for the existence of true marriage. Moreover, it admits of inequality, the woman giving herself wholly to the man, while he divides his affections among many women. From this inequality must flow misery to the woman, for she be-

comes a slave instead of a companion, while from the plurality of wives must arise misunderstanding, jealousy and hatred, and thus peace would be a stranger to the family circle. Polygamy is not absolutely opposed to the end of matrimony, inasmuch as it effects procreation, but on account of the things above mentioned its practice is forbidden. Some quote the example of some of the patriarchs, in justification of it, but their case is quite different. God permitted them to have more than one wife for His own wise reasons, but even in some of these instances occurred similar effects to those already mentioned. For polygamy there is no defense; it rests in the sinks of impurity, and should not be tolerated in civilized society. It is a relic of barbarism, and now, to the good of the world, is fast fading away.

In regard to polyandry hardly any more need be said than what has already been uttered. It is the bane of all society, the hydra-headed serpent which gnaws away the lives of millions. It renders the bodies of its followers far below those of beasts, while it defiles their souls to such a degree that regeneration becomes almost impossible. In cases where offspring are begotten, their proper raising would be wanting, because from the nature of the case, it would be difficult to say on whom that responsibility devolved. Such is polyandry that it is absolutely abhorred by all peoples having even the least spark of self-respect or love of virtue and order.

As has been said, matrimony will not permit of dissolution, except by death of one of the parties to the con-

tract, and, therefore, it follows that divorce is illicit. Separation is allowed. That is, the married may live apart, if there be legitimate reasons, but no new marriage can be effected on the part of either with other parties, during the life of their regularly espoused. This rule suffers an exception, namely, in case where two pagans having been married, one turns from his or her false religion and joins the true faith, for which act his or her partner as it may happen quarrels, and refuses to live peaceably. Then the marriage may be nullified and new matrimony may be embraced. There is another exception, namely, when a baptized and an unbaptized person are married *extra ecclesium*. But failure in procreation, hatred between the parties, unfaithfulness on the part of one toward the other, will not dissolve the bond.

In the reception of matrimony the parties promise fidelity to each other till death; this they did of their own free wills, but their assent once given, God alone can relieve them of their obligations. This, we see in Scripture in the text, "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder." The end of matrimony, viz., creation and education of progeny, demands permanency. Peace of the family demands it, the good of society demands it. Divorce is destructive of all this, and therefore should receive the condemnation of all governments.

Domestic society having been formed anterior to civil society, is not subordinate to it. God instituted matrimony, or domestic society, and from it civil society originated. It is the duty of civil society to protect the rights

of matrimony, as a child would defend its mother, but by no means to interfere with it. Of course, all things should harmonize with civil society, inasmuch as they should all tend to the one end. In this point civil society takes precedence; but with matrimony it ought not to interfere. It has no right to determine the impediments of matrimony, for this would be infringing on domestic society. It may, and should aid by preventing parties from contracting marriage, who are forbidden to do so by natural law; but outside of that, leave domestic society to itself.

Where it does attempt to dictate impediments, if they are not forbidden by matrimony itself, they are not to be regarded. Matrimony contains in itself all that is necessary, and should always be free from State interference.

From all the above it will be seen that domestic society is of the greatest importance both by its institution, object and results. It should be held in the greatest reverence, and never be allowed to suffer encroachments. For on it depends the good of all society, the welfare of government, and through its proper observance, for most of mankind, it is the means of obtaining their ultimate end; and the key to temporal and eternal happiness.



THE SABBATH DAY.

“REMEMBER that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.” In these words, which compose the third commandment of God, we have an evidence of His wisdom and providence. God’s wisdom is seen by His allotting a day to be kept in His honor, to the veneration of His majesty, and to the constant remembrance, on the part of man, of his origin and dependence on God; and His providence appears in His setting apart a day on which that honor, that veneration, that remembrance of Him, may be specially paid.

Man is negligent and ungrateful; God, therefore, has forestalled him by warning him to remember Him, and by appointing the day on which he should do so. It is a kindness on the part of God, and should be acknowledged with gratitude by all men. We are forgetful, and hence God says “remember.” It is an admonition, therefore, and, apparently, of that which we are apt to forget. God being out of sight, He is, as far as we are concerned, very often, too, out of mind, and hence He comes to us in the words of His commandment, and bids us remember that we keep holy the Sabbath day. He does not say “keep,” but mildly “remember,” acknowledging, as it were, that our better natures command us sufficiently as to our obligations toward Him; and that we need only to be reminded because that nature, overcome by its weakness, and the clamor of this life, forgets, at times, to command

the inferior parts to the performance of their duty. It is well to consider this great day, set apart by God, that we may have a knowledge of its importance. It is a question broad in itself, and open to various fields of explanation. Let us confine ourselves, for the present, with examining, firstly, what is the Sabbath day, and, secondly, whence its obligations, etc.

The Sabbath day, in the Jewish law, was the last day of the week. It was the same as our Saturday, which is called Sabbatum, and may be properly termed the Sabbath day. Sabbath means *rest*, and Sabbath day, *a day of rest*. "*God blessed the Sabbath day, and rested on it from all works,*" says Holy Writ. It was a day, therefore, blessed and sanctified by God himself. Now, man being a rational creature, and requiring, indeed, to rest from his labors, and raise his soul to God, it would naturally follow that he would select that day, as most suitable for these purposes, which His Creator chose. This, too, he undoubtedly did, for some time at least; but overcome by Satan and carried away by idolatry, the observance of the Sabbath was forgotten. Even the chosen ones of God, the children of Abraham, failed in their observance of this great day; and hence God in His commandments given to Moses on Mount Sinai, bade His people "Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day."

This, then, which before was merely implied, now became a fully explained command. The finger of God had traced it on the tablet of stone in indelible characters, and it was to be handed down, an admonition to all men.

It was, therefore, the practice of all good Jews to observe this day by going to church, resting from labors and giving their hearts to God.

In the new dispensation, however, under the Christian law, the first day of the week has been taken in place of the last; and now Sunday holds the place which before was occupied by Saturday or the Sabbath day. The cause of the change in the Lord's day is clear to all. The old law had been abrogated by the new, and among other changes was the change in the allotted day. It will be acknowledged by all that the day in itself, as long as a day is given, will not be less acceptable to the Father. But in taking Sunday for this day, more than ever are we blessed. The apostles, guided, as ever, by the Holy Spirit, adopted Sunday as the day on which all Christians should show their special veneration of God. The world had been regenerated by Christ, the old law had been lost in the new, and the Redeemer rose triumphant over death on the first day of the week. The Holy Ghost, too, when He overshadowed the apostles and rested on the head of each one of them in tongues of fire, selected Sunday as the time of His coming. Thus was Sunday doubly blessed, and marked out by God as specially acceptable to Him. In the old law, the Sabbath was observed in a holy manner, because it was blessed by God, as a day of rest and commended by Him to the observance of the faithful. Here under the new law the first day of the week has been more than blessed by God, since He selected it for the day of the Saviour's resurrec-

tion and the coming of the Holy Ghost. It was, as it were, the day on which man was renewed, for he had lost his original innocence under the old law, but now under the new he had regained it, and had been restored to friendship with God. Heaven was thrown open to mankind on that day and all the world was given up to joy.

Sunday, then, has taken the place of Saturday or the Sabbath, and now all Christians observe the new day. The matter of this or that day is of trifling importance were it not that it is right to conform to the will of God. It was His will that Saturday be observed to His honor, under the old law; but in the new law He desires that Sunday be adopted for this purpose, and hence the change instituted by the apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

OBSERVE THE LORD'S DAY.

THE Lord's day, or Sunday, has its obligation from the fact of the obligation by natural law, then by the Jewish law, and lastly from the day itself. If man was taught to honor God on the Sabbath under the rule of the natural and Jewish laws, how much more does it become the Christian to keep Sunday to the Lord, a day that brought him so many favors and blessings? We are the recipients of greater blessings than those of the first ages and should, therefore, be more ready to recognize those blessings by this little sacrifice. The Church, mindful of her divine commission, constantly tells her children,

"Remember, keep holy the Sabbath day." Her ministers in every land proclaim this admonition, and the faithful ones give heed to the call and attend to the honoring of God. With a new and better day, the Christian has also a new and better sacrifice. A sacrifice, indeed, which surpasses all the sacrifices of former ages; a sacrifice of which all others were but the shadow, the figure, being none other than the sacrifice of the Son of God. What more propitious offering could be presented to the Father than the body and blood of His own dear Son, of that son in whom He proclaimed himself "well pleased"?

This, then, should inspire Christians and all men to humbly honor that God who has showered on them so many favors; who has, with outstretched arms, gathered them from the devil's yoke, the cruel slavery of sin, and offers to them all a home in His heavenly kingdom, there to live in happiness forever. O who could refuse, then, to honor that day of grace, the Lord's day, since it marks the beginning of such favors, such endless joys!

Let us always remember the sacredness of this day; its importance in the eyes of God; its necessity and utility for man. And, more than all, remember how in the Sunday, the Lord's day, we have something more to be thankful for, more to honor God for, and more to remind us of the obligation of carrying out this commandment than the Jewish people had. And yet how strictly the Sabbath was observed among them! How great the punishment of its violation! We have Sunday; far superior to the Saturday. We have the anniversary day of

our peace restored with God to celebrate, and the occasion of the doors of heaven being thrown open to us. O let us, then, show by sanctifying it that we prize this day, that we love God, who has commanded its observance, and to prove so we observe it most strictly. We must be happy in being holy, and the way to obtain these things is to be obedient to God, who wishes us to be holy that we may be happy; who desires to pour down upon us graces more and more as we love Him more and more, who wishes to guide us on to heaven, and for this end has marked out the way by giving His commandments, among which stands out prominently the admonition, "*Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.*"

The Church appoints the mass as the chief and essential form of worship for the observance of the Lord's day, and that the faithful be no way negligent, it commands them under pain of grievous sin to be present at the offering of the holy sacrifice on Sundays and holy days. What an acceptable offering! Not with goats and sheep and oxen as under the old law, is God the Father in heaven to be adored and propitiated, but by the sacrifice in an unbloody manner of His own beloved Son.

And this sacrifice is the same as that offered up on Calvary—the victim is the same and the ends for which He offers Himself are the same. It is Calvary over again, and this world which loses divine favor by its wickedness has it restored by the welcome sacrifice of the Son of God. It is hard to understand how any one should need to be commanded to be present at this offering of

the mass—once a week on the Lord's day and on a few of the chief festivals. But human nature is so perverse that a command is necessary for many. There are those, however, and not a few, who love so much the mass that they attend several masses every Sunday of their lives, and hear mass frequently during the week.

Another service for Sunday observance is the beautiful vesper service and the benediction of the blessed sacrament, which usually closes it. How grand and touching, and how the faithful should delight in being present. It is an obligation on the ministers of the Church to recite the vespers daily. It is generally a private individual observation, save in some religious communities, where it is possible to say the office of the Church in common; but even then the people can hardly take part. But on Sundays the vespers are sung and the people are exhorted to be present, and they should rejoice at the opportunity and avail themselves of it as frequently as they can.

Finally there is the counterpart of the mass—the benediction of the blessed sacrament. How the faithful should gather in the might of their numbers, and in the depth of their devotion and piety and hail their Lord present in the blessed sacrament and commune with Him, lovingly and devotedly adoring Him and praising Him and thanking Him out of the depths of their soul.

Let all keep the Lord's day. It will be a good beginning of the week. Begin it well, with the Lord, and He will attend you through the days that follow with every grace and blessing.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD.

OF all the feasts of our Blessed Lady, none is more grateful to us than that of her Immaculate Conception. It is dear to the whole world, but especially to the Catholics of these United States, for it is their patronal feast. Nowhere in the whole world is Mary more loved and honored than in this, the land of the free. Let us strive to lead the whole world in devotion to her. She is worthy of our greatest love. *"Thou art all fair my beloved, and there is neither spot nor stain in thee,"* sings Holy Church when commemorating her Immaculate Conception. Purer than the snows of heaven, brighter than the sun, was Mary from the first moment she was conceived. And well and proper it were so! For was she not to be the Mother of the Son of God, Who would take flesh in her womb and offer the life she gave Him in sacrifice for the sins of men? How could it be that she were ever under sin or the ban of Satan, whose power she was to crush and destroy under the might of her heel? From the very first she was filled with the Holy Ghost, filled with grace thereof, and so as child and maiden found complacency with the Father and predilection with the Son and Holy Ghost. Thus was Mary in the divine mind greater than the angels, and the highest in worthiness of all the creatures of God. How all heaven must

have rejoiced at the moment when she was conceived, and how must they rejoice and felicitate her on every anniversary of it. Let us Catholics of these United States proclaim aloud her goodness, her greatness, and her glory, and let no other nation outdo us in the demonstration of our love.

We are free men, and as such can appreciate what it is to be the free children of God. Through Mary we enjoy that boon, for she helped to give liberty to our immortal souls. We love our national freedom and our flag that proclaims it. Let us still more love our eternal freedom and the cross which declares it; and whilst honoring and thanking the Son of God who saved us by dying on it, let us honor and thank His Immaculate Mother who gave the life He sacrificed for all mankind.

Praised be the Immaculate Conception!

AMERICA'S PATRON.

FAVORED, indeed, is our country with Mary Immaculate as its patron, and wonderful should be the lives of its citizens under her protecting care. Every virtue and every noble quality mark the Mother of God, and virtue of every kind by her intercessory prayers she would gain for every member of the human family; but, for none more so than for the people of these United States, of which she is the chosen patron.

Man's relations with God are many and constant, or, to speak more correctly, God's relations with man are continuous and man's relations with his Maker should also be without interruption. Those relations may in part be carried on through the intermediation of the saints, and through no one will they be carried on so unremittingly as through the Immaculate Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and queen of the whole heavenly court. Witness her power with her Divine Son, as shown at the wedding in Cana when, at her request, He changed water into wine, lest the host and the guests be discommoded. See our Lord's tender relations with His Blessed Mother all through His earthly career. And since He did so much for her when he was in self-accepted want and in lowliness here on earth, how much more will He not do now in all the untrammelled power of His divinity and the splendor of His glory! And we know the readiness of our Blessed Lady to assist us. Holy Church acknowledges it and teaches it when she instructs her faithful to say: "*Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*"

How much we American people have to pray for as a people and as individuals! Our country is so vast in its extent and so populous in its numbers, and in both it is expanding. How much wisdom is necessary to guide the ship of state as it courses new and untried seas, and how much spirit of Christian, brotherly union is required to make the varied, ever-increasing multitudes unite in one homogeneous mass! Do we not need the God of

nations to direct us, and do we not need the help of our heavenly queen, Our Lady of Good Counsel, to save us from dangers and extricate us from difficulties?

Then, as to the virtues of the nation: First, in the case of those who are in authority, and then in the case of the simple citizen; how much enlightenment is needed to insure the making of just laws on the part of those who govern, and how much spirit of obedience is required on the part of the governed or those who are expected to observe them? Then there is the matter of personal honor and honesty—the relations between the employer and the employe; the private virtues, the domestic relations, above all, the sacredness and inviolability of the marriage contract and the sanctity of the family and the home. And to offset the evils which threaten to destroy them, such as unworthy ambition for place and abuse of the power which it brings; dishonesty in the handling of public and private funds; the bringing of discord and ill-will between capital and labor; the violation of the moral code, the absence of family love and union and, worse than all the rest, the extension of divorce, that hydra-headed monster evil that destroys the family, home and society all at one and the same time. Surely Heaven's aid is needed to save the nation and the people from all these perils, and on whom can we better call to assist us in our petition than on her whom God chose to be Mother of the Redeemer of the World and Saviour of Mankind?

It is strange inconsistency which will invoke the help of God and not ask at the same time the intercession of

His Holy Mother. It is incomplete Christianity which will pay homage to the Divine Son and fail to give any honor or respect to His Blessed Mother. And yet this, alas, is largely the practice of many, and particularly in this land of the free of which the Immaculate Mother of Christ, the Son of the Most High, is by the voice of holy Church, the specially appointed patron. Let us, the Catholics of these United States, help reform these errors by all the greater love and veneration for our Blessed Lady. Knowing the power of prayer and especially of intercessory prayer, let us call upon her aid to obtain graces and blessings for our beloved country and upon all its favored citizens. She is the mother of the world's freemen, because the Mother of Christ, who made the world free from the poison and destroying power of sin, and who freed mankind by striking off the shackles with which Satan and sin had bound them. It is sin that threatens to enslave society again. To her, then, we should have recourse and ask her help to save us from the threatened danger. It is the demon of Satan that is striving to rob man of the peace which Christ, the Prince of Peace, brought to the world after His triumphal resurrection over sin and death, by plunging it again into enmity with God by causing it to yield to the darkness and death of sin. Let Catholics set their face against the evil one and call often upon Mary, the Immaculate Mother of God to save their beloved country and all its people from the power and deceits and the snares of the devil. And she will heed the prayer, and as she did in

the past she will do now in the future, crush the hydra-headed monster beneath her royal heel.

Long live the republic! And long will it live if Mary, the Mother of God, would be the accepted goddess of her liberty and the mother of her freemen.

CHRISTMASTIDE.

THE chilly blasts and falling snows tell us that December's days are on us, and midst the gloom, the dark, dull skies bring with them the brightest, cheeriest light of all the year with the joyful Christmas morn.

It is now that the heart grows light with hope, for all the world is ringing with joy over the advent of Christ, the Saviour of Mankind. It was, indeed, two thousand years ago that the Son of God was made Man, and yet it is as if it were yesterday, for its effect is as fresh and forceful as on the day itself. It echoes down the years and ages, telling and retelling to men of every time and clime, the joyful tidings of salvation. How the heart glows at the announcement which angel voices still whisper in our ears that "unto us this day is born a Saviour," and that peace is again on earth to all men of good will—and so we hasten to welcome our new-born Lord and to adore Him as did the shepherds, and to give Him of our gifts—as did the wise men—and proudly proclaim Him, even in His manger throne, our Lord, our Saviour, our God, our King.

What would time be without eternity? what would earth be without Heaven? what would life be without death to usher in eternal life? are questions that bring with them their own answers. What would be the year, therefore, without the blessed Christmas day? Ah, it would be as naught; it would have neither the rainbow of hope nor the sunshine of realization, but would be one series of painful trials and bitter disappointments, a galling yoke of weary days and dreary nights that would make living unbearable. Without Christ, in a word, and without the salvation He brought, this world would be a veritable charnel-house, and its inhabitants the unhappiest of mortals. For bad as well as good this would be the case, for there is no peace nor rest but from God—the only good. There is not a moment's sunshine in life but what comes from the eternal light and the eternal beauty, which is God alone, and none can be lasting unless sustained by Him. He alone is the unchangeable good, and good will always come to us as long as we turn towards Him with reverence and with love—sin only can bar His smiles from falling on us, and sin alone can take His peace away.

For four thousand years sin did both—Adam's sin closed Heaven against himself and all his posterity. Though so terribly outraged, nevertheless God was merciful and compassionate, and in time sent His only begotten Son to redeem the world by being born man and dying on the cross. He was the New Adam, and His Virgin Mother was the New Eve. Man had sighed

and cried for four thousand years for reconciliation and peace, but there could be no peace until sin had been atoned for. Christ paid the price of our salvation, and henceforth peace and rest, love and light, were seen again in this world; and this will be ever the happy boon of the good and prepare them for the same in infinite degree through the endless ages of eternity—whilst the wicked will know no rest nor lasting peace in time or eternity; for, as the Holy Scriptures say, "*Who hath offended God and hath had peace?*"

So, Christmastide is a time of peace. Our Lord is styled the Prince of Peace, and His angels announced His message when they made the midnight air music with their hymn of "*Peace on earth to men of good will.*" The whole world was at peace when our Lord was born in Bethlehem, typical, indeed, of that heavenly and eternal peace He came to give the world. This is the peace He would have always reign—namely, peace with God, peace with our neighbor, and peace with ourselves. Let us get this peace ourselves, and let us share it with all our brethren. Christmas is the day of good-will to men. It is God's way, it must be ours, too, if we would have His love and blessing. It is the time for forgiveness and reconciliation, for it was thus our Lord did to us. It calls for deeds of loving kindness to the poor, the sick, the distressed; it suggests alms, deeds for the suffering little ones, who so faithfully recall Him in His poor manger; and thus we will deeply drink of that joy which comes of well-doing to others. But let us make the

Christmas feast the greatest joy to our souls by having our Lord born in our heart, by a worthy Holy Communion, then will our joy be indeed complete, and that joy and peace which will accompany it will remain with us as long as we keep from mortal sin—for Christ was born to us that we might be born to Him, and His Christmas blessing is His birth on every Christian altar—that He may be born in love on the altar of every worthy Christian heart. Blessed and Happy Christmas to all the world!

THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS.

OF all the seasons of the year, the Christmas season is the most liked by all. Young and old delight in it, poor and rich find pleasure in it. The humble home rejoices as well as, and even more so than, the gilded palace. Merchant, clerk, capitalist, laborer, teacher, student, all rejoice in Christmastide and hail its advent with delight and strive to reap the fulness of its joys.

It is, of all the year, the most gladsome, and every one seems happy and is trying to make others happy by such deeds of kindness as it is in his power to bestow.

And why this general joy? Is it that men by common consent have agreed on one day and one time to lay aside differences and to rise above petty jealousies and ascend to higher conception of their own and their brother's dignity and to respect and treat one another accordingly?

And that at the close of one year by way of an act of thanksgiving and at the beginning of another by way of hope they wish to have general joy and good will prevail in the desire of letting bygones be bygones, and all to begin anew fair and free from anything of the past?

No, this does not explain the peace and joy, the good will and kindness of Christmastide. It is now well nigh two thousand years since this general joy began, and naught but the divine interposition can explain its uninterrupted continuance. If it were of man, like man, Christmastide would have changed and passed away long since; but its institution was divine and it draws its continued life from Him who began it on that day of days when Christ the Saviour was born to the world, and His message was rung out on the midnight air by angel voices singing, "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will."

This is the reason of all the joy and happiness that prevail at the blessed Christmas time—the fact that peace was brought to the world by the Prince of Peace, the precious Babe of Bethlehem. From the beginning of the world, for four thousand years, there was no peace, for Adam's sin had taken it away, and all that man would do could not bring back that lost peace again. But the merciful heart of the Father in heaven was touched and He brought peace again to the world by giving up His Divine Son in atonement for the sins of the world. And thus the peace of the first Christmas day will last through all the ages of time and shall live for all eternity. Hence

the joy from that day to this is the peace we may have here in preparation for the eternal peace of heaven, if we only be grateful for the mercy that has come to us and show the same by being men of good will. It is the good Christian who, mindful that Christ has redeemed and regenerated him, that has made world-wide the celebration of Christmas, the Saviour's birthday. From the fulness of the peace and joy overflowing his soul has gone out year by year the religious enthusiasm that awakes the whole world. In every Catholic heart affection for the holy infancy of our Lord and Saviour burns with a flame of the tenderest feeling which makes everything connected with that time of His life a most sacred memory. Bethlehem, the stable, the manger and Jesus lying in it wrapped in swaddling clothes, 'neath the smiles and tears and loving caresses of Mary, His Virgin Mother, and Joseph's faithful care, are pictures that never leave the pious mind, but which become most realistic at this time of the year which commemorates their occurrence.

The unthinking world will attribute the peculiar joy that marks the Christmas time to the force of custom that has grown with the progress of time, and give little heed to Him whose birth it commemorates or the tender love of the ages of faith that prompted the honoring of it and which succeeding ages have continued; and hence the mere perfunctory and oftentimes senseless way the Christmas festival is kept and its superficial observance which leaves no trace behind. But with the thinking Christian, how different, for with him it is not merely a feast of the

senses, but a feast of the soul, of which the external observance is but the slight reflection of the all-consuming love within. Hence his joy is heartfelt and lasting. The goodness he shows to others is unselfish and his good wishes are sincere, for all are based on divine motive—the motive to do the best that is in him for his fellow men; because of his love for Christ who in being born man has become the brother of all and who in manhood's years preached the gospel of brotherly love, saying, "love one another," and "whatsoever ye do to the least of My brethren ye do unto Me." This is what makes Christmas what it is—the feast of brotherly love—that love we, first and above all, show to Christ the Son of God, who has adopted us as His brothers and sisters by taking our humanity, and then show to one another by reason of our love for Him and to honor the Christian dignity with which He has invested us. It is to all, too, that we are to manifest our good will, for it was to all Christ came; but we are to be good and kind, particularly to those who are most like Him, to helpless childhood, to the poor, to the orphan, to the homeless, to the friendless. The King of Heaven and Earth, "who whilst possessing all things made Himself poor for our sakes," and poor we were, indeed, with the doors of heaven closed against us. Sin closed them, but Christ opened them again. Let us rejoice, then, and unite our alleluias with those of the angels singing, "Glory to God in the highest!" Let us hail their message of "Peace," and be worthy to receive it in fulness by being men of

good will, as, repenting our sins, we humbly bow in adoration with the shepherds, and ask the grace of being born anew to Christ, born anew on blessed Christmas day.

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS.

"WHAT shall I return to the Lord for all the things He hath given to me?" exclaimed the Psalmist.

The same should be the question every one should ask himself on a New Year's morn. God has given me life, He sustains me day by day, He redeemed me and holds the gates of heaven open to me; what shall I return Him for all these blessings? Shall I forget them all, shall I abuse life and spurn death and eternity; shall I give up heaven for earth and God for Satan? This is what I have been doing if I have lived a life of sin. Shall I continue it any longer? Nay, more, shall God allow me to do so? Then rise above this earth and its wickedness; rise above yourself and your corrupt nature, and list to the angels singing their glad alleluias to Christ, your new-born King. Yes, hear the voices of countless millions of good men and women all over the world chorusing to their song, and join your praise to theirs and welcome to your heart your Lord and your God, Jesus the Redeemer of the World. He adopts your nature that you may share His, and from a mere animal life, live henceforth the life of the soul.

And so this is the gift you can give Christ on a New Year's morn, the gift of a new life—a life truly Christian, built up on His pattern, and sustained by His grace. "Walk before me and be perfect," said God to Abraham, and the same He says to every one. Let us obey His command. It is our duty to do so. God has a right to our homage by creation, redemption and preservation, and we are unjust to withhold it from Him. Let us begin with this new year a new life. Let us become prayerful and co-operate with the grace of God. We have only to try and God will do the rest. "Resist the devil," says St. James, "and he will fly from you. Approach to God and He will approach to you." Let us begin, then, a holy life, a life for heaven. Soon death will claim us. It claimed millions and millions last year. It will do the same this. It will claim hundreds, perhaps thousands of us. Let us be ready to die by living well, and then we need not care how soon death comes. Yes, we will welcome it, for it will bring for us the crown of eternal salvation.

THE NEW YEAR.

ANOTHER year has come! Its advent fills us with joy, for it is a promise of new life and opportunity. It is true it finds us all nearer the end of the allotted time that God has marked out for everyone of us, and yet we do not repine, but take up the new year joyfully, gratefully and hopefully. It is like a new lease of life—the old

year died and passed away, but we live on, the richer and wiser for our experiences.

How beautifully closed the old year! While the days of time seemed to grow weary and finally to die and pass into the oblivion of the past, eternity seemed to dawn brightly and beautifully in the Christmastide, when earth gave way to heaven in welcoming the Lord and Saviour, who makes the earth His footstool and would have us imitate Him and make the things of time but stepping-stones to the things of eternity. He would have us follow the divine and eternal life by uniting our thoughts and affections to Him who lives on always; and would have us live in Him here in preparation for living in His divine presence forever hereafter. Thus is the Christian year closed with faith, and the new year opens with hope and charity, as the love of God and the love of our neighbor bind the new year with the old and make happy each fleeting year as it hurries down the abyss—the abyss of time to the fathomless ocean of eternity.

The new year brings with it a new and strong spirit. It inspires resolution and invites effort. Looking back at past years, how much one finds in them to regret, and who, if he only could live them over again, but would live them better! The new year gives the opportunity to practice and to make atonement for the past. The present moment and each recurring moment offer the chance we so much desire, but we must struggle to improve the opportunity as it goes fleeting by. It is this that makes up the round of man's duties during the time of his

earthly pilgrimage: the going about doing good, the same as his Lord and Master did when He walked upon this earth. He let no opportunity for doing good escape Him. He labored for His bread resolutely and contentedly. He never lost sight of heaven midst the things of earth, nor sought to do His own will, but to do the will of His Father in heaven. He rejoiced with the joyful and sorrowed with the sorrowful, and was kind and sympathetic, good and generous to the poor, the needy and the suffering. And what He did, He did that we might copy Him, for this alone is living—true living as God who created us intended us to live, and nothing short of living our lives in this way can bring us peace and contentment here and insure for us the same entrancing joys hereafter.

Let each one, then, resolve to so live the year that it may be a means to reach heaven and the endless joys of eternity. It is to save our souls that time and the days and the years that comprise it, is given us. What will it profit to have received life and to have abused it and thrown it away, as they do who pass their years without thinking of the God who made them, or thinking of His divine will and law which He expects them to fulfill, as he does all the rest of creation? And thus our Lord said, "keep My commandments," and He tells us that we have but to try in His name, and that the power and grace to carry out God's expressed will shall abundantly be given us. How nobly stands out the Christian life in comparison with the life of the infidel and the worldling! They live

but for themselves to the exclusion of God, and cannot in their eagerness to glut every desire, have any thought or care for their neighbor or feel for his sorrows, or sympathise and help him in his wants. But the faithful Christian man and woman have the heart of their Saviour dwelling in their own by grace, and prompted and aided by the divine law, have their thoughts on heaven, their eternal home, and only turn them to earth when fulfilling their duties to God and to their fellow men. "A little bit of nature," as the adage has it, "makes all the world kin," and love, Christian love, is the link that can bind all men together. Let this love be the life of the new year, and its days will be filled with rich deeds which will have their sweetest of joy in the doing of them, and will be rewarded one day with the endless and boundless joy of eternity. God gives us the new year that we may use it for His glory and for our eternal salvation. Let us so live it and we shall find it a happy year, for it will give us a foretaste of the happiness of heaven.

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll."

—O. W. Holmes.

Another year has gone, and another has come.

The one has closed, and its record of good and evil has become a thing of history, and stands on the shelves of time, another volume of the world's triumphs and defeats, and of man's conflicts and sorrows, as bearing his cross he walks this vale of tears.

How brightly shines the sun today ! Earth peers from out her snowy mantle and speaks words of bright promise, and our poor hearts beat high with hope as we listen to her siren voice, telling us of the triumphs awaiting us ; but the recollection of the past and preceding years steal o'er us and from their blighted hopes and blasted fortunes we enter with dread uncertainty the new year. But, oh, these, indeed, are gloomy thoughts and sad forebodings ! They are the thoughts of the disappointed worldling rather than the man of faith. We must read all in the light of heaven, and know that all is good and for our good which He sends us.

Another year is another blessing. Such was last year with all its deaths and dread disasters, and such, indeed, will be this year of our Lord. It will be full of opportunities to do good, to glorify God, to serve and edify our neighbor and save and sanctify ourselves. It is not backward, but ever forward we must direct our vision. We have begun to live, but in our immortality we are never to die. We have these new years for our increase of undying faith, renewed hope and growing love ; let, then, each day find us faithful, midst the trials of life, overcoming all obstacles, resting calmly on the arm of God who battles and triumphs for those who put their trust in Him.

HAIL, HAPPY NEW YEAR!

THE bells have sung their song of Old Year out and New Year in, and we have felt the thrill of all that means—a year gone to judgment to be weighed in the scales of eternal justice, and to be credited or discredited according to its value.

Another year come, to be placed on trial with all who shall live it and count for aught or naught one day in the great reckoning for eternity. How quickly passes time! Seemingly but a few weeks ago we were hailing the advent of the year just closed, and soon the greater part of its successor will also be gone. It is for all to improve their opportunities as they are speeding by, to “catch the fleeting moments as they fly,” and make the best they can of them.

A new year makes one think. It marks a new era; it inspires hope and courage and prompts earnest resolution. We look back on the old year and see the little that most of us accomplished in it that will count for eternity—nay, much that will count against it. We have much to regret, therefore, and much to repair, and in God’s goodness the new year offers the opportunity. All is clear before us, and to succeed, we have but to try. God wills our improvement, nay, desires our perfection, for He would have “an acceptable people a pursuer of good works.” Let us make a beginning, and with God’s grace and our fidelity to it we shall succeed.

What makes failure in an undertaking? It is generally the inability or unwillingness to cope with obstacles that come in the way. As this is the rule in mere material things, it is also the rule in spiritual ones, only there is this difference; in the material we have to depend largely on our own strength and efforts, whilst in spiritual things our dependence must be almost entirely on God—for it is only our will and our feeble acts that we give, and even these must be the promptings of God's grace, and all the rest is God's.

And this should give us courage—the fact that we are bound to succeed in spiritual things if we try, for God is with us in them. The world is busy with itself and seeks to make the most of the fleeting years. Its votaries turn night into day, so eager are they to participate in its pleasures, and they wear themselves out before their time in their mad race to gain earth's prizes, that they may have the money wherewith to purchase them. The thinking Christian might well imitate their activity, while avoiding its excess, and strive to do everything he can to enjoy the pleasure which virtue brings, and aim in all things to gain the love and grace of God which ensure it. But let us realize that our duties in life are twofold, namely, the spiritual and the temporal; and yet they are inseparable and blend as one in the one great duty we owe to God and to ourselves—the duty of salvation, for to this end must all things aim, and must all things be directed. We only do either well whilst doing well the other. Hence, the Christian man is always a

Christian, and is doing all things in a Christian way, whether these be spiritual or temporal, religious or secular. He is always sedate and earnest, as particular in small things as in great ones, for he feels that there is nothing indifferent and that in everything he can glorify God and help to save his immortal soul. Such a man hails a new year with inexpressible delight, for in it he beholds God's gift to him wherein he can serve Him anew with redoubled zeal, glad of the opportunity to do so, and conscious that with the hurried march of time his chances to serve Him are growing less and less. The worldling hails a new year with the thought that it will give him another round of pleasures, another race for wealth—but how often are his hopes and his plans cut short by death! Ah, this is what the worldling thinks of least, and what the Christian man is mostly thinking of and is ever preparing to meet. "Man proposes but God disposes." The world does not consider death, though it goes stalking before it every day. It veils its eyes as it passes, and will not let the lesson it teaches enter the mind. How unwise this course, for sooner, or later must the stern reality be met, and Death will lay its icy fingers on the worldling and will carry him off to the grave. O that men would but enter into themselves and look at things as they really are!

Holy Church is constantly echoing in her sermons the words of God. She is continually preaching the lesson of death and bidding man to prepare and be ever ready to meet it. For we have not been made for earth but for

heaven. "We have not here," as says the Apostle, "a lasting city, but we are to seek one that is to come." The things of this life should not absorb our attention: we are to use them only as means to an end, and that end is that one day we reach God and the eternal kingdom of heaven.

Let us, then, while hailing the new year with joy and wishing one another our happy New Year, give thanks first to God for giving us this new time in which to serve Him, and then resolve to use it for the good and help we may be to one another. Soon, like preceding years, it will run its course—so let us strive to make it a year of holiness, and then shall it be a good and happy year for us, and will be made happy through us for all about us. God grant it be a happy New Year for all.

"REMEMBER THY CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF THY YOUTH."

THESE words of God, as spoken to us in Holy Writ, are striking in a high degree. They tell the great importance of one's conduct in early days as forming the foundation of the kind of life that is to be led afterwards. It is with man as with all other things. The great, solid structure rises from a strong, well-laid foundation. The tall, stalwart oak grows up from an acorn that imbeds itself in good, rich soil, and which is nurtured by the dews

and sun's rays. The mighty river has its rise in some little eddy on a mountain side. Everything is in the beginning, and if the beginning is good and the course be continued along the same line, the end must be good and will be great in proportion to the start that was made. "Mind the beginning," someone has said, and experience proves the wisdom of the counsel.

Thus God tells the young to remember Him in their first days when they are forming habits and acquiring principles of thought and action, for these will remain with them all through their lives and will be for them the factors of their success or failure. It is in the time of youth that the seeds of what our future life is to be are mostly sown. "The boy is father to the man." As is the youth, so, for the most part, is the after life. If the young shoot be good and sound it will one day become a fine tree and give good fruit; for, as the Scriptures say, the good tree beareth good fruit, but a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. In the case of a man or woman, their youth must be sown in virtue if they are to blossom forth and yield the rich and abundant fruits of a holy life. There are some exceptions to this rule, but the greater number by far of those who have been illustrious for their goodness and virtue are found to be of those who from their youth up have loved God and kept His commandments.

Now, this appeal to the young which God makes, namely, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," supposes that the young have the power to re-

spond to it; that is, that they have come to the years of discretion and can readily think and act for themselves. In childhood the boy and girl are faithfully watched over by loving parents and devoted guardians, who are careful to gradually instil into the slowly-developing mind little lessons of truth and virtue; from the first the little hands are taken and clasped in prayer and the child is taught to look up to heaven and lisp the name of God and His blessed Mother, and thus they are guided through the years; but after infancy has long passed away and youth's short period is fast hurrying to manhood's and womanhood's estate, then the future man and the future woman are asked to begin to build up a good and holy, an honorable and useful career, by laying broad and deep, within themselves, the foundations of goodness and piety.

The time of youth may be said to be the *battlefield* of life. Its dangers are great, its temptations many. The glare of the bustling world and the whirl of its dizzy pleasures entrance the young and unwary, and unless they are well poised they are soon carried away into sinful excesses. It is then the time that choice must be made—God or the world, virtue or sin. In the present choice the future rests. Hence God's appealing words, “Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth,” for in His wisdom He knows that unless one makes a right beginning, a good ending is hardly to be expected. The care with which good parents guard and shield their children in their helpless years should be continued by themselves when they have grown up. The lessons they

were then taught should be put into lasting practice. They are now able to serve God more intelligently than before, and they should be faithful in doing so. They need all the grace and blessing that they can get, for in youth not only are the world and its allurements to be met and overcome, but Satan and self both conspire then more fiercely than at any other time against the soul and nature. Hence the need of the young of calling constantly upon God to help them, by His grace; hence the need of fortifying one's self by prayer and the sacraments.

At all times there are great accessions to the number in the class or age known as youth, but at no time are they greater in number than in the time when the young are graduated from the schools. Then they come, as it were, all at once; they go out from their *alma mater*; they leave their teachers who watched over them up to that time, and must sail alone on the ocean of life, with only such principles of virtue to guide them as they learned and practiced in their school days. It is then God speaks to the heart of the young through the unmistakable voice of conscience, and bids them through every sense of gratitude for the gift of life and in token and hope of a glorious immortality, that they should keep His holy law and persevere in union with Him all their years. In a word, serve Him with their whole mind, with their whole heart, with their whole soul and with all their strength.

God's appeal, therefore, is timely to all young men and young women when leaving our Catholic schools and

colleges, to be true to the lessons of faith and piety which they received, and build broader and higher as the years advance. This will, indeed, be the case if they keep faithful to the graces which will be given them through prayer and the sacraments. The great advantages they enjoyed of learning and practicing their religion in their school days ought bring rich and abundant fruit all the rest of their life. God will make it so if they but have good will and co-operate as best they can. Let them be wise and keep themselves free from the contaminating influences of bad companionships. Let them watch and pray and God will keep them safe and bring them after life's journey into the haven of heavenly rest. Their barks will be kept clear from the rocks of vice and error as they sail on the high seas of life in honest, noble effort to take an honorable part in its duties; and they will escape the shoals of sloth and indolence on which so many barks are wrecked, because they who sail them have no higher thought or ambition but for the foolishness of this deceiving and disappointing world. With heaven always the aim, and the love of God the directing force, let our young people be ever active and energetic as their youth warrants, and faithfully press onward and upward, striving to bring honor and glory to God and to His Church as faithful children, inspired by the words of our great poet Longfellow in his immortal "Psalm of Life":

" In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle,
Be a hero in the strife.

“Trust no future, howe’er pleasant !
Let the dead past bury its dead !
Act—act in the living present !
Heart within and God o’erhead !”

THE CHRISTIAN FATHER.

THE father is the head of the family. It takes his name. Man is the head of the woman and his authority is to be obeyed. His is the chief part in society, and his is the responsibility of the home in its inauguration and maintenance. While the natural law supposes the fulfilment of these obligations, the Christian law insists on it. And this is the difference in men—one is faithful, the other recreant to duty. But the Christian worthy of the name is ever true to his obligations, and so the Christian father is the ideal husband to his wife and the model father to his children.

As a Christian, such a father strives to copy the example of St. Joseph, the foster-father of our Divine Lord. He is the good provider of the home, the faithful, loving consort, and the noblest and most tender of fathers towards his children. His home is an earthly heaven, because God is adored and loved there; and the spirit of love and union that hovers round the family hearthstone tells of the virtues that live in the hearts of all who dwell within it. Such a house was Nazareth in a high degree, and each Christian father strives to imitate that holy house in his wish to make a worthy and happy home. It

needs not wealth, nor grandeur to make the Christian home. It only requires virtue springing from the love of God and the desire to have all things conform to His divine will and pleasure. Whilst the mother is the great factor in making a home virtuous and happy, still the father's influence is most potent when exercised for good, and his spirit and example are far-reaching in power and influence. If he be a good Christian father, the good mother's part is more than half fulfilled.

A man's power is in his virtues. If he possesses them, he is strong, indeed; he commands the respect of his fellow men. The good father has a great influence in the home. He is the honor of his wife and the glory of his children, and the honorable name he leaves to both is their richest heritage.

As he is in the home, so in society the Christian father is a power for good. He, in fact, is the pillar and conservator of society. Men look up to him for guidance, for he is wise beyond other men, and they put with him their treasures, for they know they are in honest hands.

Such a man is public-spirited, for he knows it is his duty to live for and co-operate with his fellow men in all that will be for the common good, and in his relations with the community he is broad-minded, liberal and unselfish. He is the Christian gentleman all the time and in all things, and feels and acts up to the principle of "*noblesse oblige*." Such a one is the true citizen as well as the true Christian, and happy is the state that has such

men within her borders, and safe is the society where such form the large number of its citizens.

But it is in his dealings with his Maker that the Christian man, the Christian father, is at his best. There he rises to the occasion in the breadth of his reverence for his Creator and the depth of his love. He is a God-fearing man and his whole conduct is strict and exacting. He fulfils the divine law faithfully and abides by the divine will cheerfully. He is ever mindful of the divine presence and, like Abraham, he strives to walk before the Lord and be perfect. Such Christian fathers have been found in every station and in every walk of life. Such have been kings upon the throne, such have been found and are to be found among the lowliest of earth's citizens.

It is only a question of grace and fidelity to it that makes the Christian man and the Christian father. As St. Paul said of himself, every Christian man may say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." It is grace that refines and perfects nature, enobles mind, purifies heart and strengthens will, and it is this power that is shown forth at its best in God's noblest work—man.

Our divine Lord is the prototype of Christian manhood, and his foster-father, St. Joseph, is the model of Christian fatherhood. All men who have excelled in either, have drawn their inspiration and their aims from one or both of them. Thus did the saints, and St. Paul acknowledged it when he told his hearers, "Be ye imitators of me, as I am of Christ."

The power of example is incalculable. It is the pebble dropped in the sea of life which moves the waters even to eternity. Hence all men who wish to honor their Christian name should ever strive to be worthy of imitation. It was thus our Lord exhorted in His day. "Let your light so shine," said He, "that others seeing, they too may glorify their Father who is in heaven."

The father of a Christian family should strive to be worthy of being its head by the nobility of his character and the perfection of his life. For this God's grace is all-sufficient. His responsibilities to his family and to society should inspire his highest aims and best endeavors. The fact that he is looked up to should make him worthy to be imitated, and the fact that he is supposed to leave his impress upon his progeny should keep him always in the fear and love of God, of whom he is the representative to his children, and to whom he will one day have to render an account of their souls.

Let us ask each Catholic man to be a Christian man, which he easily can be if he receive the grace of God by frequently receiving the holy sacraments. Let us exhort the fathers of families to be worthy their dignity by the greatest fidelity to wife and offspring. Let us exhort the young man who intends to enter the married state not to put off unnecessarily the fulfilment of the intention. In all things our Catholic men should be models: pure in morals, strict in principles, honest and just in dealings. Let theirs be a character grand and noble;

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their life a glory to God and an honor to their Church and to themselves—a boon to their country and a blessing to society.

THE CHRISTIAN MOTHER.

THOUGH man is the head of the family, its life and strength rests in woman. She is the power that counsels man in his doubtings, restrains him in his impulses, and urges him in his sloth. It has been said that a man is what his wife makes him, for her influence for good or evil is unquestionably great. It is thus the Scriptures speak: "Who shall find a valiant woman? Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her." This is pre-eminently the case with the Christian mother. Such a woman stands out from among her sex. She is filled with a sense of her dignity and her responsibility, her mind is upon her duty, and she is ever faithful in fulfilling it. She is the glory of her husband and the honor of her children.

As the family is the cornerstone of society, the Christian mother, who is the bone and sinew of the Christian family, is certainly one of the largest contributors to society's well-being, for the Christian family is the strongest force in keeping society together. It is the great conservative power, for it is the office of Christianity to build up and hold together all things that will conduce to the social well-being and betterment of the people.

Wherein lies the strength of the Christian mother? It is in her virtues. Her modesty captivates and commands the respect of all. Her devotion and self-sacrificing spirit teaches a lesson worthy of imitation, and her wisdom and self-poise are enlightening and reassuring to those around her. Such a one is a pillar of strength to the home and a guide and counsellor to the society in which she lives. Her power for good is only limited by her environment, and the fruit of her good example is visibly marked in those who make up the circle of her friends.

Whence comes this extraordinary power and what is it that contributes to make up a character so exceptional? It comes from her Christian faith. That blessed gift of God is hers and its influence is the power enlivening and strengthening her soul. It is faith that supernaturalizes her life and makes her thoughts and actions good and noble because she wishes in all she does to give homage to God, whence she has received life and to whom she hopes to go after her mortal years have come to an end.

Thus the Christian mother realizes the dignity and obligations of her state, how she is to be the handmaid of God to carry out the divine will in faithfully performing the duties of her station. To be a faithful and obedient wife and a good and self-sacrificing mother to her children is her aim, and to fulfil it her happiness. Her every endeavor is along the line of duty and her constant thought and prayer is to ever be pleasing to God and to

have the divine help with which to pass creditably the days and years that will be allotted to her.

Like all who wish to reach perfection in any career, she, too, has her models and copies them. Thus she imitates our Blessed Lady in her humility and prompt obedience. Thus she copies St. Elizabeth in her reverence for things holy and her regard for the divine presence. A St. Monica is her model for resignation and hope. A St. Bridget for contemplation, even if it be necessarily only but for a few moments. A St. Teresa for fidelity to the divine will. A Queen Blanche in her readiness to see her child lying dead at her feet rather than to know that he had committed one mortal sin.

This is the Christian mother as she has been in the case of thousands of women, and this is what every mother who rejoices in the name of Christian ought to strive to be, and for this God's grace is sufficient. It was grace made these glorious Christian mothers what they were, and grace can do the same and will do the same for all others if they ask for it and co-operate with it. Grace gives to each state the help it needs to perfect itself. And thus the grace of patient suffering, the grace of fortitude and resignation, the grace of trustful prayer are for every woman who asks it of our good and merciful God.

With grace working in the soul what wonderful lives can be produced, and what an influence for the founding and preservation of the home and home virtues? Then we behold saintliness of life, for the individual is ani-

mated with the spirit of perfection; everything in such a soul is of God, from God and to God; all its thoughts and deeds are the promptings of His grace, and all tend to His honor and glory. What virtues are visible in the home of a soul like that, and how happy are the members of the household where a true Christian mother reigns and keeps all its members in peace and virtue! The home of the Holy Family at Nazareth is the pattern of what every Christian home should be, and the humble, obedient and perfect spirit of our Blessed Lady should be the ideal which every Christian mother should strive to imitate. There all was loved for God, and such a spirit should mark every Christian home. All good and great men have had good mothers. "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." This is surely the case, for what the mother is the child is apt to be.

Hence the aim that every mother should have, namely, to be a model of virtue, so that her children may inherit the same and be the preservers of society to succeeding ages. In our true faith this is possible to the highest degree—as exemplified in the countless mothers who are numbered among its saints and heroines.

Let every Christian, every Catholic, mother strive by grace to have this grand and noble spirit that she may perpetuate the virtues and fruits of Christian motherhood.

THE HOME AT NAZARETH, MODEL FOR A CHRISTIAN HOME.

IN the Christian's home is found rest, rest for the entire man. It is the earthly port of safety, where the frail bark of humanity may weather the storm; where the soul may nestle in peaceful hope undisturbed by the elements that ruffle the sea of life.

And how could it be otherwise? Is not this the Christian home? Christian, Christ-like, therefore similar to that in which our Lord spent most of His earthly days.

Let us go back in spirit to Nazareth, where Christ, our model, lived, and see His home, which should be the model for all others. In that humble, little town the holy home was placed; Joseph and Mary were the happy inmates. In persons three, but in spirit one, their pure thoughts ran in the same mold, their loving hearts beat in the same measure. Poor, they labored hard for their common support. Jesus was the most obedient of children; Mary the most tender of mothers; Joseph the most devoted of fathers. They knew no will but God the Father's, and in this lay the secret of their happiness. Obedient to that holy will, all else was easy; they wished for nothing more than God was pleased to give them; asked for nothing other than to know and do His pleasure.

It is this home that the Church proposes as the model to all Christian families. Peace and good will, mutual

love, sanctity, all the virtues were shining there in all their beauty, and only the intervening skies made it a place different from heaven. That home is the most Christian, and, consequently, the most happy, which is most like the home at Nazareth.

If we would have happy homes we must make them Christian. But to succeed we must first be Christians ourselves. We must begin within and build outwards; commence at the heart, purge it of all defects that impede its natural goodness and open it wide to the influence of God's grace. All the members of a family becoming good and holy in this way, we have union and peace, and all that makes happiness, or, in other words, we have the Christian home.

On such a home God sends his choicest gifts and blessings. It matters not whether this home be rich or poor, whether it be known to many or few, it needs but be wholly Christian to be truly and constantly happy.

TRAINING THE YOUNG.

ALL will concede that there is no matter of graver importance for fathers and mothers to consider than the education of their children. It calls for more thought than anything else, because of all it involves. The father may be succeeding or not succeeding in the purposes and aims of life, but he knows it is on the education of the children that their success is to be built. Hence his

concern that this education be all that it should be. Good masters, latest and best methods and everything that will contribute to the education of the child are what are sought for, and when found, they are not easily given up. But must we not allow that there is a grave defect that weakens and renders less effectual education when it is only secular?

It is this defect that the Church wishes to avoid when she insists that the knowledge of God and of holy things be a part of the education of the child, and so she rears her schools and colleges for that purpose. Everywhere you go you see them. The fair hills throughout the land are crowned with her seats of learning, and throughout the cities are seen her colleges, academies and parish schools growing in size and beauty with the country's progress. Grave, serious-minded men, with their country's weal at heart, are looking on at this, and feel the wish deep down in their heart that all education were as this, built up on religion, and that God and country, faith and fatherland, should go hand in hand with the nation's development and advancement. Any one who has a belief in God and in a future life must concede that there should be some consideration of this in our lives here quickly running to an end. But how is this to be brought about unless the knowledge of God and eternity be made a part of one's education in the seed time of youth, for it is then that are formed the principles that rule one's conduct in after life.

Catholics have in their faith a boon more precious than all things else in the world, but it is to be put into practical and effectual use by being made the chief factor of their daily thoughts, aspirations and endeavors. It is in youth that this is to be begun, for, as the Scriptures say, "Train a child in his youth in the way he should go and in his old age he will not depart therefrom." The Church fostered knowledge when the world was in ignorance. She led the world out of barbarism, and she would lift it up to the highest ideals of civilization and of virtue. Her success in the past has been through her religious power, through God, in a word, and through the light and strength He gave her. She would do for the world still, and does do where she can, particularly for her beloved faithful children.

"Go forth, teach all nations," said our Lord to His Church, "make known to them whatsoever I have commanded," and this is what the Church has done ever since and will do to the end of time. To carry out her mission she must necessarily be a teacher of all things, secular as well as religious. They are entwined and cannot be separated without injury to each other. It is her principles and methods that are the underlying means of education that the world calls the best today; but education divorced from religion is as the body without the soul, and fails to have the grand results it otherwise could have. Let Catholics proclaim that religion and education should go hand in hand, and let them show the world by the magnificent results of their colleges and schools,

that every education should have God and religion as a part, if it is to last, and to make for the good of civilization—patriotism and progress.

“A CATHOLIC CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO A CATHOLIC EDUCATION.”

THE words of the late great Cardinal Manning should be taken to heart by every Catholic parent or guardian. No one knew better than he the value of education. He was trained in the best schools of his time, and, yet, looking back on his life, he no doubt regretted that it was not his good fortune to have been earlier educated in a more religious atmosphere—the atmosphere of truth and purity, such as is to be found in Catholic schools. Nestling as it does 'neath the very shadow of the church, where dwells the Lord of all—the Sun of Justice, the Light of the World, the Word of God, who has rightly said of Himself: “I am the way, the truth, and the life”—the Christian school gives forth the teachings of Christ in its every lesson. Everything in the Catholic schoolroom tells us of Him who came to teach the world and to make it, through Him, learn to know, adore and love its God.

The teachers are either religious or religious in character, and thus influenced by the spirit of God. The teaching is flavored, therefore, with the sweet spices of truth and purity, without which education is vain, and

the young souls under their zealous care, so quick to perceive their worth, as only youth can do, give to their teachers that respect and confidence which enables them to make rapid strides in the acquirement of knowledge. No wonder that the learned cardinal discriminated between Catholic education and secular education and declared so forcibly that a Catholic child has a right to a Catholic education, for he knew full well that that was the best outfit for a child with which to cope with the dangers and difficulties to be met with in a wicked and trying world.

There are those who belittle Catholic education, but the voice of the great cardinal should silence them. They say it is not as good as is to be got elsewhere, but experience proves the contrary. That is best the good effects of which last the longest. It is certainly best for Catholics. Of all the Catholics who hold positions of honor and trust, the reward of their knowledge and their fidelity to principle, almost to a man they have been educated in our Catholic schools and colleges.

Some think it more expedient to ignore Catholic schools, because they wish their children to be with those in childhood with whom they must associate in after life, or in other words, to begin the world in the schoolroom. Is not this contrary to the custom of the wise? Will not life, worldly life, be long enough without beginning it as soon as one leaves the cradle? Will good and wise parents give up their children to indiscriminate association? Is this the way they do at home—viz., allow

everyone indiscriminately to come and make common lot with them? Ah, such we know, fortunately, is not the case, and yet the same principle should be the rule throughout. The school is but the ante-chamber of the home, and the home, we know, ought to be the ante-chamber of heaven, of which God's Church on earth is the vestibule and the ever-open door. Home and Church and school should be so many connecting links in the one great chain binding earth to heaven, the creature to his God.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION THE ONLY TRUE EDUCATION.

NEXT to providing a child with the necessities of life, such as food and clothing, the most necessary thing to give him is a religious education. This is a most sacred obligation on the part of parents toward their children. The child is God's, and has been made for Heaven, and religion is the link that will bind him to his Creator during the days of his earthly pilgrimage.

Education must be twofold in its character—religious and secular—if it be worthy of the name. The heart must be developed and trained as well as the head to make education complete. The child must be taught to know, love and serve God, as well as to know the beings of this world and the things that are in it.

So the Church has her colleges and academies everywhere to impart this perfect education, and for the great masses of her people she has the parochial schools. To provide religious men and women for the religious training of the young, the Church is unceasing in her efforts, through her bishops and priests, to foster vocations and to encourage the bright of mind and pure of heart and generous of soul to take up the work and to go forth and labor in union with our Lord, who will be teaching through them, and who said, "learn of Me," and commanded that the little ones be allowed to come around Him, saying, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

The school is the nursery of knowledge, and childhood is the seed-time of life. How important, then, that the school be Christian, and that the life of Christ be held up as the model life which the child is to be encouraged to copy in his own, and how necessary that His divine words be the first seeds that will be sown and cultivated in the youthful heart.

Nearly everything for a pupil's success depends upon the teacher's knowledge and ability to impart it; for, with ordinary application, a child must learn and advance under such an instructor. As this is true with regard to secular instruction, still more is it true with regard to religious instruction, for the bond is closer between teacher and pupil and the influence greater and stronger. There is a kind of heart-to-heart understanding, the inno-

cent child sees in the teacher an exemplification of all that is beautiful and noble in character, and its impressionable soul easily and unconsciously takes on the same, and one of the sweetest memories of its after life will be the days spent under such holy influence. The truly Christian teacher in our Christian schools is, indeed, a powerful factor in the perfect training and forming of the child, and many a prayer will be said for the teachers in after years by their grateful pupils.

How important it is that Catholic children be sent to Catholic schools, where everything is done to give them an unsurpassed secular training while the religious education is so faithfully watched over! How unjust and how unwise for parents to deprive their children of that greatest of blessings—a religious education! The foundation of temporal as well as eternal success for the Catholic boy or girl is a Catholic education. They will be only half educated in any other school—and a Catholic to be a Catholic cannot do anything by halves. They must be fully equipped if they would conquer in the battle of life and take a leading and successful part in the struggle for existence. Let Catholics, then, be a unit on the necessity and advantages of Catholic schools. Let them use no other and do all they can to maintain them and bring them to the highest excellence, and the result will be not only the betterment and advancement of Catholics themselves, but likewise the improvement and betterment of the whole world, for though the drop of yeast be little, to borrow the Scripture simile, it will be in the providence of God the leaven that will leaven the whole mass.

OUR SCHOOLS ARE HOMELIKE— PROGRESSIVE.

OUR parish schools are truly homelike, and the happiest place a child can be. The children seem to realize this, for they study well and conduct themselves in a most becoming manner. It is the aim of the brothers, sisters and those assisting them, to have the children correct in every particular. Hence, attention is paid to every detail—cleanliness of appearance, and propriety of decorum, are insisted upon just as much as punctual attendance and faithful study, and the result is seen in the real fine gentlemanly boys and ladylike girls that are the outcome of the schools on graduation day.

A school, indeed, is a parish pride, and its graduates bring glory to it in the colleges and schools they attend afterwards. We cannot too often appeal to the parents to do their part in the education of their children. They must look to it that the little ones see in them naught but what is worthy of their respect and imitation. The Christian school instructs and forms the child to a Christian life, but Christian parents are to put into practice in the home the lessons the child receives in the school, and sink deep into the mind and heart of the child the principles of knowledge and piety which will be the basis of his or her character in after life. The school is for one and for all, but the home is for the individual child alone.

It is for parents to so speak and act that their children be led to lead perfect lives. The parents should have an honest pride in themselves, for the uplifting and advancement of their children; and the children in turn should be proud to bring joy and honor to their parents by the goodness of their hearts, the brightness of their minds and the purity of their souls. The schools are doing their part.

By daily supervision on the part of the principal, the frequent visits of the pastor, and by the visits of the superintendent, both teachers and pupils are brought to do their best, and so attain highest results. Our schools are, indeed, all that schools should be, and no parent or guardian should deprive his or her child of the grand Christian education they give. It is hard to particularize the excellencies of the schools where there are so many, but one to which we would call attention here is the uniform nobility of character and earnestness of purpose that mark the pupils of the highest classes. "Judge a tree by its fruit," is the old familiar adage, and so the fruits of a school may be judged by the fine boys and girls it can show in the higher classes. This is the result of the years of painstaking efforts on the part of the zealous religious and the correspondence thereto on the part of the pupils, for it must be mutual. The clay must yield to the hands of the potter, the block must yield to the machine that tools it. Thus the childhood of the children is well-founded in both knowledge and piety, which points hopefully to the future, and we feel pleasure in

anticipating the lives of honor and success that await these good children in the world that they must soon enter. "Train a child in his youth in the way he should go, and in his old age he will not depart therefrom," so says Holy Writ. May we not confidently expect to see it verified in the future lives of the dear children of our schools?

THE SCHOOL AND HOME LIFE.

THE schools are busy with their work. The scholars are striving under the leadership of their learned and holy teachers to climb the tree of knowledge and ascend the scale of perfection. But it is not in the school alone that the pupil is to be taught and brought up. The scholars spend only six hours of their day in school. For the remaining eighteen they are in their homes. There is home training as well as school education; and both must go hand in hand, if the child is to be fully instructed and developed mentally and morally for a successful career for this world and the next. It is pertinent to ask the parents and guardians of the children how well they discharge the duty resting on them. Are you faithful? Are you really interesting yourselves in the advancement of your children? Are you particular to see that they study their allotted daily tasks? Are you strict with regard to their conduct? Are you faithful yourselves in giving your children good examples of virtue and holiness?

These are burning questions in the matter of parents' duty in a child's education, and parents cannot be said to be true to their obligations unless they can answer yes to every one of them. God Himself in the commandments teaches children to honor their parents—"Honor thy father and thy mother"; but He also lays down the parents' obligations of watching over and guiding the children in the right paths. All these beautiful relations of parent and child are what are taught the children in their parish school, but the practice of them is to be carried out in the home.

Let us ask the parents to help the children to attain to that perfection to which the school is trying to bring them, by their own fidelity to a truly Christian life. Let the home be Christian as well as the school, and then what wonderful results will follow. The children will grow up more beautiful in heart and mind every day. They will be striving to reach the highest ideals, and one day will be the glory of their homes and their schools alike—a credit to the parents who reared them and to the brothers and sisters who taught them, and be the good citizens of earth—and afterwards the happy citizens of heaven.



THE SCHOOL, THE CHURCH'S COUNTERPART.

WITH the regular services of the Church, go the exercises of the school, for both go hand in hand. As the cathedral is the mother of the college, the seminary and the university, so each parish church is the mother of the Christian school. It is begotten as a natural consequence, for religion would, indeed, be incomplete unless it entered into and formed a part of the daily instruction of the child. And so, once the Church had her colleges and seminaries established, she turned her attention to even the youngest of her flock and established the parochial schools. These are her nurseries where youth will be lovingly watched over by spotless souls consecrated to the work, and where the seeds of knowledge sown by them will be watered with the dews of virtue, and grow strong and enduring in the sunshine of God's grace.

We see the schools flourishing on every side and the Catholic youth flocking to them—and hence the lifting up of the great Catholic body because of the spread of Christian education among the masses. It is bearing wonderful fruits; the graduates of our Catholic schools are making their mark in life. They are rapidly advanced from one post to another till they fill the highest in the gift of admiring employers, and one need be no prophet to foretell that after a decade or two of years have passed,

our Catholic men and women, taught and trained in our Catholic schools, will take the first places in every career of honor and usefulness.

OUR SCHOOLS AND THEIR SCHOLARS.

EVERYTHING looks bright and cheery at the schools. They are regular beehives of study—no drones are allowed to remain in them. The scholars are attentive and painstaking in their tasks. It is well—for if a child is allowed to remain at school and not study, it would be criminal. If it has sufficient reason and can comprehend, then, by application, it ought to succeed, as many have succeeded and are succeeding in every grade of life. We have but little fault to find with the scholars or their parents with regard to the amount of study done at home. For the most part they give evidence of the same by their recitations in school. Apart from the good that comes from home study in the advancement of the children, there comes the benefit of the habit of occupation and industry which they acquire and which will stand by them in after life.

Parents should never allow their children to be idlers, for if they idle away their youth, they will idle away their after years, and then become useless to themselves and to society. It is the wish of Holy Church to uplift

and better the condition of her people through the grand foundation given the children in her schools; and it carries its aim through every grade of study from the A, B, C up to the highest in the Catholic University. The Church's system is complete and is open to all her children. Let the parents, then, instil the noble ambition in their children to profit by the advantages placed at their disposal. It is said, and truly, that the best heritage a parent can leave a child is a good education. It is worth more than gold—for it will purchase far more than gold can, since it will bring the delights and benefits of knowledge that will sweeten their lives in the intelligent enjoyment of the things of life, while it will enable them to put their knowledge at the same time to the best advantage of themselves and society.

A CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND CATHOLIC HOME.

ONE of the features of a Catholic school is the freedom to exercise one's conscience along the lines of faith. Hence, we have good Catholic prayers at the beginning and end of the sessions both morning and afternoon, good Catholic reading matter in the reading books from which selections are memorized, and last, but not least, good Catholic hymns are sung frequently. In this any thoughtful mind will at once see that the teachings of

our faith are inculcated not only in the daily lesson in catechism or Christian doctrine, but blend themselves as well in everything else as far as possible, so that the child in a Catholic school is in a Catholic atmosphere, and is breathing Catholic life. Now the work of the school is to be supplemented by the home life. As the school is thoroughly Catholic, so should be the home. The parents and guardians of the children must be thoroughly Catholic themselves, if they wish their children to be so.

Hence the home has its part, and a very great part, in the training of a child. "Scandalize not one of the little ones," says our Divine Lord. This chiefly applies to parents and guardians for what they say or do; in a word, how they live has a great bearing upon the formation of the life and character of their children. If the home has not the evidence of Catholic faith, such as religious pictures on the walls, holy books on the shelves; if no word of church or priest is spoken, or very rarely spoken; worse than all, if parents do not go to mass and the sacraments; nay, more, if parents use wicked and blasphemous language, and ill-treat each other and their children, the result most likely of intemperance, surely they are not doing justice to the children in the matter of their proper bringing up, and the consequence will be all the good, or most of the good they receive in the parish school will be blotted out, and instead of the fine Christian men and women their teachers hoped to make them, they will become careless and indifferent Catholics; they will not differ from their parents, nay more, they

will be worse if anything; for they live in more dangerous surroundings and must face much greater temptations. Look to it, parents, to be yourselves what you wish your children to be—religious, sober, creditable Catholic men and women, and with the Catholic school helping you, you will make your children be all that and more than that, when they come to their majority.

SUMMER REFLECTIONS AND ANTICIPATIONS.

As just before the heated term sets in, we are busy with the accounts of schools and colleges closing, and note the creditable part played by our Catholic institutions, so as the summer wanes we look at the coming school year just looming up on the horizon, and make our preparations accordingly.

What shall they be? Surely that all the old pupils of our schools return to finish their course, and many new ones come with them. There is a growing sentiment in favor of religious education. Thoughtful, public-spirited men acknowledge its benefits and are glad to see it introduced by the different religious denominations. It is the prize problem of the day, the solution of which is to bring honor and renown to the man or men solving it. Religion is no longer to be discounted where there is question of education, but is to have its proper recognition

and part. If this be the case, as it surely is, how important that Catholics lead in this movement according to the spirit of the Church. Our late Holy Father, Leo XIII, proclaimed against the divorcing of secular and religious education; it behooves Catholic people to heed the behest; and wherever there are Catholic schools and colleges, to them and to no other the children are to be sent. How many a youth lost his faith in a non-Catholic college who would have been a shining light for Holy Church had he been sent to one of the many excellent Catholic colleges of the land?

The same may be said for the simple parish school. There the children are grounded in their faith, the foundation of eternal life for them, while in the secular school all that is lost to them; and the little faith they have, for want of proper nourishment, is stunted in its growth, if not eradicated altogether. Look to it well, therefore, and consider, ye Catholic parents and guardians, and if you weigh this question in the scales of eternity, then your children no longer will be sent where their faith will be lost or weakened, but where it will take deep and lasting root that will bear fruit rich and abundant unto eternal life.

The past success of our schools has convinced people generally of their excellence, and all who want their children to be grounded in their religion, as well as to receive a good course of secular knowledge, are glad to send them to the schools. It will be the delight as well as the pride of the brothers and sisters to make the children a

credit and a comfort and a help to Church, home and country.

Patriotism goes hand in hand with religion, and love of home and country are held up, as they should be, as twin sisters. The foundation must be deep and broad if a mighty edifice is to be erected upon it, so in love of God, love of home and love of country must be founded the life which is to tower high above the common by its worth and excellence. We are only sowing the seeds of the fruit that is to follow. "As we sow, so will we reap." "As the twig is bent, the tree inclines." If a child's life is carefully nurtured in piety and knowledge, if his youth be carefully guarded against evil, then we know that it is taking deep root in faith and virtue, and we may look with confidence to such a one when arrived at manhood's or womanhood's estate to be a religious and domesticated person, a helpful neighbor and a good Christian and good citizen.

REFLECTIONS FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS.

PARENTS and guardians ought to ask themselves are they doing full justice to their children in the all-important matter of their education? In a word, are they giving their children the best kind of education available? Catholics must answer *No*, if they are not sending them, when possible, to Catholic schools. Let all remember the

reason of these schools—the fact that education, to be complete, should be religious and secular combined. Convinced of this, the Bishops of these United States, in the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, decreed, with the approval of Leo XIII, that pastors should open parochial schools, where it was practicable to do so. From that time schools were opened throughout the length and breadth of the land, and the Catholic youth were for the most part sent to them, and thousands of holy religious left home and kindred to teach them. This began a new era for the Catholic people of America, and so great has been the success attending this movement of Catholic education that the heaven poured in response to the Baltimore Council has leavened the whole mass; and thousands and thousands of successful men and women acknowledge that their success is largely due to the training of mind and heart that they received in the parish school.

This was exemplified in Rochester a few years ago when, at the suggestion of Bishop McQuaid, the rector of the Cathedral parish called together the graduates of the school for the twenty-five years of its existence. Two hundred and fifty ladies and gentlemen responded, and a finer and more creditable body never assembled. Among the ladies there were noble matrons and teachers, and scores of business women, whilst many could only send letters, as they had entered religion. Assembled among the gentlemen graduates were doctors, lawyers, a congressman, several judges, an editor and several journal-

ists, many clergymen, together with merchants and businessmen innumerable. The parish schools are the best schools in the land, and the Catholic colleges unexcelled. Both are crowned by the Catholic University at Washington. Let Catholic youth avail themselves to the full of their great advantages, and the fruit will be citizens of the highest intelligence, patriotism and virtue.

GOD BLESS OUR SCHOOLS.

May He, from whom all lessons flow,
Give one and all a Father's love—
And lift the heart and mind to know
The knowledge of the things above.

One's lessons must in God be learned,
If profit be for earth or heaven—
The will of God must be discerned
Before this earth with good be leavened.

So bless our schools, O dearest Lord,
With knowledge fill, from sin keep free;
Fill heart and mind in true accord
With faith and truth and love of Thee.

Life's battle then is fought and won,
And peace will come for blessings given—
By those earth's tasks will best be done
Who learn to labor first for heaven.

GRACE BEFORE AND AFTER MEALS.

It is a good thing to feel grateful and it is a better thing to show it—hence the good old Catholic practice of grace before and after meals. This is a formal way of beginning and ending one of the serious and most important duties of life; for what is more important and of more vital consequence than the nourishing of our bodies and the renewing of their strength? We pray to God to give us our daily bread, and through His bounty we receive it. He makes the earth yield up its fruits and gives us strength to reap them and mind to garner them and will to adapt them to our use and benefit; and for this we should be thankful—and thankful every time we sit down to partake of our daily repast. “Whatever ye do, whether ye eat or whether ye drink, do to the Lord,” says Holy Writ, or, in other words, we are to make all our actions a means to honor and glorify Him, and to show our love and gratitude to Him. The prayers assigned to be said before and after meals are for the faithful, short and to the point—and no Catholic should excuse himself or herself from saying them. At one’s own table they should be said by the head of the family or the senior member present and all the rest responding Amen—while if one be at another’s board they should be said privately when not publicly recited. There is a disposi-

tion on the part of some to neglect grace before and after meals, a kind of affectation not to be considered pious, founded on human respect, but this is cowardly and unworthy a member of the great Catholic Church. The table has its rules of etiquette which good breeding and good form require to be observed, so Catholic teaching and principle require the observance of those brief words which comprise grace before and after meals. They make a good beginning and ending of those necessary acts in our daily life, and prepare us all the better for fulfilling the rest of our duties. Let us all be faithful in being grateful.

A FEW MINUTES WITH GOD.

CATHOLICS who live in large cities hardly realize the advantages they possess over those who live at long distances from a church. They sometimes fancy they are doing a great deal if they get out of bed Sunday morning at eight or nine or ten o'clock and walk a few blocks to be present at holy mass. The sacrifice they make is, indeed, very little in comparison to the difficulties which many of their fellow-Catholics in the country have to make in order to obtain the blessings which are given to those who attend the sacrifice of the mass. But aside from this, city folk have their churches open all day till evening, where our Blessed Lord is ever present in the tabernacle waiting for them. If you, kind reader, if you

live in a city, could only realize this blessing, what a difference it would make in your life. How easy a matter it is for you to step in a moment, and, in less time than you waste in talking with a friend, ask God, who is actually present, for help, for strength and for mercy. Think of those who live many miles from a church, where they rarely see a church or priest.

Reflect on this thought and act upon it. You are here today, tomorrow may never come for you. The churches are always open to you and you can visit your Lord. How often do you do so, except when a law or precept obliges you? Many a one owes his salvation to making a visit to God's house and there asking forgiveness. Try it, and see what grace you will receive. If you pass the church and have a few minutes to spare, run in and offer yourself, your wants, your desires to God, who is there waiting, waiting, waiting for you.

PEOPLE'S EUCHARISTIC LEAGUE.

IN October, 1895, the Catholic people of the country had their minds turned to Washington, for there were assembled bishops and priests from all quarters of the United States to honor in a triduum of exercises the presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. It was the first convention of the Priests' Eucharistic League in America. There have been triennial reunions since that time; the last in 1904 in New York, which was a most successful affair.

This devotion is likewise extended to the people, and all are asked to unite with the members of the sanctuary in honoring in a particular manner our Lord in the tabernacle. When on earth with His apostles our Lord had sometimes to reproach them with their neglect and forgetfulness of Him, for they were distracted by the world around them, and had their thoughts more often upon themselves than upon their Lord and Master; and thus, in His agony, He chided them with the words, "Can not you watch with Me one hour?" Should we not feel these same words said to us when we neglect to honor His presence?

It is for this that the Eucharistic League is now extended to the people, and they are asked to come and pass an hour or a half hour a week before Him dwelling always on the altar. Oh, let us gladly do so, and wonder why we did not do so before. Where shall we be happier than when in His presence, and to whom can we better confide the secrets of our hearts than to Him, so powerful to counsel and comfort us in them? Let us thank Holy Church for putting into form that which we so naturally wish by organizing and blessing with indulgences this beautiful devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and let us show our appreciation by joining it and being faithful to its obligations.

VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

VISITS to the Blessed Sacrament are always in order, but especially during the Forty-hour Devotion. And one of the resolutions we naturally make during the exposition is to come and visit our Lord often, if not daily.

We go to see our friends and neighbors, and who is a greater friend or better neighbor than our Divine Lord? Sometimes we go and find our friends absent, and oft-times when we find them home, we come away with sorrow and disappointment; but our Lord is always at home in His place on the altar, and we never come to Him but what we return cheered and comforted. He listens to our sorrows and tells us how to overcome or bear them. He lifts our burdens and gives us the sweets of His love instead. As no one can meet a good and wise person without profiting somewhat, so no one can come before Him, who is goodness and wisdom itself, without great benefit. "Come to me all you that labor and are heavy burdened and I will refresh you," says our Lord.

Oh, if we would only take our Lord at His word, how different would it be with us! Going before His altar every day of our lives, we would pour out our souls to Him and tell Him every care and want, and rise from our knees strong with His blessing and grace to be of good heart and cheer, for He would whisper to us words of

light and wisdom, of strength and hope, and bid us be not afraid, but trust and hope to the end. "I have overcome the world," he says, "and you will overcome it in me." "Soon your sorrow will be turned into joy." "Watch with me and I shall watch with you." "Strengthen yourself at the banquet of my love." "I am all yours that you be all mine." "I am your support in life. I shall be your viaticum at death and your glory in eternity." Let us greet our Lord daily.

FEAST OF THE PURIFICATION— CANDLEMAS DAY.

THE joyful Christmas and New Year seasons may be said to last till January ends and one is loth to part with them even then, but time must run on and with its course come the anniversaries of those different mysteries that attended our Lord's life.

The first is that which we celebrate on 2d of February, when we commemorate the Holy Family going to the temple the first time after the Lord's birth to fulfill the Mosaic law. They were not under the law and yet they observed its provisions. Hence the Immaculate Mother fulfilled the law of purification—the King of Kings consented to be presented in the temple to His Eternal Father by the hands of the High Priest—and all this to teach us who are necessarily under the law and the rule

of those in authority, that we are to obey readily and cheerfully, and ever to accept uncomplainingly that which constituted authority demands. Our Lord said He came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it, and this is exemplified in this visit to the temple.

Mary was no less pure because submitting to the law of purification, nor was our Lord any less God because condescending to obey the law. Nor should we forget that these very condescensions on the part of our Divine Lord and His Blessed Mother were fulfilling the law and will of God, since these old Mosaic laws were what God had taught the law-giver to teach the people and to insist on their observance.

Holy Simeon rejoiced to see the Divine Child, and taking Him in his arms broke out in the fullness of his joy with the words, "Lord, dismiss now Thy servant, for now mine eyes have beheld thy salvation which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people." "A light has come to the nations and a glory to Thy people Israel." It is this light we rejoice in today, and the candles blessed on the Purification typify Him who is the light of the world and the salvation of all who believe in Him. Let us renew our faith in our Lord as the light which is "the true light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world," and resolve to be lights unto others by the reflection that will come into our souls by walking closely in the footsteps of Him who bids us "so let our light shine before men that, seeing it, others may be led to glorify their Father who is in Heaven."

Let us love our Blessed Mother for her poverty in having only the two poor little doves to offer at the Purification, whilst admiring her humility in submitting to the observance of the law. Let us imitate the Divine Child who condescends to be brought under the law which He came to supplant with His own—the perfect law. Simeon had the honor and the happiness of holding our Lord but for a few minutes, and how great his joy and the enthusiasm to which it gave vent. It is ever ours to receive Him into our hearts and souls, and there to receive Him frequently, yes, even daily, if we strive to be perfect and keep Him always the guest of our souls.

Let us avail ourselves of this greatest of privileges—and profit by the graces and blessings it will bring—blessings to mind, to see and know God better ; blessings to the heart, that we may have all that our hearts can crave, to love and be loved in inseparable union. But for this we must have humility like our Blessed Mother, and, above all, have purity of mind, heart and soul that will make us acceptable to God, and worthy to have Him come to us and make himself known in the temple of our souls.



SPRING'S RETURN.

THE chirping of the birds tell us that spring is with us again. The air is growing milder by the warmer rays of the sun. The days are lengthening and a feeling of activity and energy runs through everyone and nerves all to work with greater will and stronger endeavor with the opening of spring. The fields will soon put forth their blades of grass and grains, and the trees and bushes will send forth their buds, and soon we shall behold all nature bright and beautiful. Who will ever forget the apple or the cherry he has seen in blossom, mayhap in the bygone days of youth as he played round his father's cottage in the country, or perhaps was making his studies in his college home far away from the barren city? What thoughts the sight of these things suggest!

Then is nature growing day by day in beauty and loveliness. The buds grow into blossoms and the blossoms into flower and fruit. The tiny grain shoots up into the waving branches, and in time comes an abundant harvest. How the heart is entranced by the study of nature—and how its thoughts rise from earth to heaven, whence all this beauty and bounty come! Let us join in the hymn of thanksgiving which all nature sings to God, its great creator, the giver of all these gifts. The birds sing His praises, and the waving branches keep time with their song. The blooming fields bespeak the fullness of

His bounty, and the beautiful fruits and flowers seen on every side gladden the sense and sight of man and fill him with feelings of deepest gratitude, which in a true Christian heart find echo in fervent prayers and thanks to God.

We cannot leave these spring thoughts without calling the moral they suggest. It is this: Since God renews nature every springtime, does He not wish to renew our hearts as well? He gives to the fields a new life; will He not renew the life of our souls? Ah, yes; this is what He wishes and will do if we allow Him. And so nature, which grows so beautiful, so bountiful and so fruitful under His divine hand, will be outrivalled in us by that same divine hand, renewing and implanting in us beautiful thoughts, bountiful virtues and fruitful deeds which will be the joy of the present and the glory and reward of our future life.

SPRINGTIME AT THE SCHOOLS.

EVERYTHING is bright and beautiful at the schools. The attendance is good and the spirit of study is excellent. We can not refrain from calling the attention of all parents to the importance of looking to the Christian education of their children. Of all education the most important is that given in the first years, for it is the foundation of that which is to come afterwards. If the child's education be Christian, that is, an education in which he

will hear much of God and heaven, of Christ and His Blessed Mother, of his guardian angel and his patron saint, then his mind will be from the first directed to look above and beyond this world to the God who made him, and he will be led to obey His laws and do all he can to reach his eternal destiny. Earthly things will be held secondary to heavenly ones, and this life will be considered as only a passage to eternal life.

It is for this that Holy Church has erected her parish schools, and bids her faithful send their children to them. Our Catholic schools are second to none. Their graduates are bringing glory to them by the success that follows them wheresoever they go; and, best of all, they have a good, practical knowledge of their faith, which will be for them a ready passport to heaven, as long as they are true to the practice of receiving the holy sacraments frequently as they did in their school days.

All educators place first in importance primary education and grammar education, for therein are learned the principles and methods which make sure and easy the higher education of after years. It is the good, solid foundation on which can be firmly built the college course, and even the practical course which one learns in the business world. How perfect are primary and grammar education when religious instruction accompanies them; how defective when wanting!

THE LENTEN SEASON.

THE Church clothes herself in penitential garb and asks her children to unite with her in considering the passion and death of our Lord and Saviour. To the wilds and the solitude of the desert she leads us in spirit and asks us there to behold our beloved Lord fasting forty days and nights in preparation for His passion and death.

Holy Church would have us enter into our Divine Lord's thoughts and there see revealed His love for every one of us by the atonement He makes in our behalf and the infinite graces He lays up to save us. She bids us realize that as long as we call upon Him to save us by the application in the holy sacraments of the infinite merits of His passion, He will hear our call.

Our Lord's life on earth was indeed a hidden life. For thirty years He lived in the obscurity of Nazareth, and even in His three years' public life, we read of Him more in the hamlet than the city; on the mountain, in the desert, and by the sea. And so He climaxed this spirit of seclusion and retirement by His forty days' preparation for His suffering and death.

Did He not do all this to teach us and get us to imitate Him? He needed no solitude to bind Him to His Father, for He never was separated from Him. He did all this for example, that we who know and meet the evils and see the dangers of unrestraint might the more readily

practice mortification of spirit and betake ourselves at least from time to time to seclusion and solitude.

Lent is the time that most favors this. It is a time set apart by the Church for prayer and fasting—for restraint, recollection and piety. The good Catholic conforms, everyone who desires to save his soul responds, and so marked and general is the observance of this season that the outside world cannot but notice it and be influenced by it. It is a time of grace and blessing. So the Church proclaims it, and applying the words of St. Paul, that it is “the acceptable time, the day of salvation,” bids all the faithful to pass the season in a truly holy and self-denying manner.

Let us, then, respond to the call and always make a good Lent. Its days should be full with mortification of every kind; appetites, senses must all be restrained, lest they lead us to ruin. And while we take our eyes off things around us, we can look into things unseen; live more in faith and things of the soul than in the idle speculations of the mind and the gross indulgence of the body; live more in the future than in the present; live more in death than in life. And while we thus will be mortifying the bodily man, the spiritual in us will rise to a purer life and to closer union with God, in preparation for the joys of eternity. Let Lent be well passed, and it will be a great means of passing well our whole year afterwards.

And while we are denying the body, cannot we refresh and satiate our soul, if we will, at the banquet of the Holy Table? Let us do so often, that we be nourished and be

made strong with this bread of life, to ever conquer our temptations and be always united with God and ever ready to meet Him.

During Lent Holy Mother Church bids her children pause and consider in a serious way how they stand with God. That they may do this the better she sets apart the Lenten season as a time of special devotion. She opens it in the most solemn way by recalling the lowly origin of man's body that he may regulate the unruly passions of his lower nature and bring them into subjection to the soul. "Remember," she says to him, "O man, that thou art dust and into dust shalt thou return." The body upon which you bestow so much thought and care is of little consequence in comparison with the immortal soul of which you are heedless. Yet your eternity of happiness or unhappiness depends upon the state of the soul. Do not neglect the body, but do pay some attention to the soul; let it share your solicitude, if it does not engross it.

How necessary this warning of the Church is will appear plain to anyone who weighs in a balance the minutes devoted to the welfare of the soul and of the body. So light is the amount in the soul's scale that it is scarcely appreciable, some ten or fifteen minutes would represent the average, while in the body's scale the minutes count up to hours. Yet we claim to be reasonable beings. Judge us by our actions, and do we prove ourselves worthy of the claim? Again, let us test ourselves by our

aspirations, and how do we stand? Does the desire of heaven find a place in our minds and hearts at all? Earth and its vanities are so engrossing that they fill both mind and heart, and even when death approaches and the glamor of the world should have lessened, man still clings to earth and what it has to offer, and it requires an effort to turn the thoughts of the dying man to heaven and its real enduring joys.

No wonder, then, the Church, fulfilling her duty as the representative of God, endeavors to make man think seriously of his origin and his destiny. No wonder she bids him consider the superior claim of the soul over the body. For the body comes from the dust and shall return to the dust, but the soul comes from the hand of God and is destined to return to Him.

In a true Catholic spirit, then, let us enter on the holy season of Lent. Let the lesson of the ashes placed on our brow on Ash Wednesday be impressed on our hearts. If we cannot observe a rigid fast or even abstinence throughout, but avail ourselves of the dispensations granted by Mother Church to those of her children who by reason of health or work have a right to them, let us at least make up for it by some special act of mortification or devotion. For mortification for men it might be the giving up of all intoxicating drinks in honor of the Sacred Thirst, or foregoing the use of tobacco; for women, the eating of sweets and dainties. For devotion, for both men and women, the best practice would be attendance at week-day mass, the special Lenten services

of their church, the stations of the cross, a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, the recitation of the beads or some other suitable prayers. Lent thus spent would indeed be profitable, and a worthy preparation for a joyful Easter and the Paschal communion.

So a good Lent means a good life for another year at least, for this is its purpose, to bring about a better life for everyone. It is a time of reflection and resolution, but, above all, it is a season of grace and strength and blessing which, if corresponded with, renews spiritual life within us, and makes us burn with the love of God and the desire to live for Him alone in the exercise of our faculties and powers. On all sides we see in Lent most edifying examples given us by every grade of society. The tender maiden, the strong mechanic, the ordinary laborer, the banker, the physician, the lawyer, the high-born lady, the steady housewife, the servant maid, the teacher, all are represented by numbers more or less of their class piously passing the Lenten season through the keeping of its fast and observance of its public devotions and exercises. It is a most consoling sight to the clergy, and many a "God bless you" is invoked by them on the good, holy people by their fathers in Christ. Let Lent always mark an era in the sanctification of all.

LENT, THE SPRINGTIME OF THE SOUL.

IN these bright, promising days the face of nature changes, and on the hard, cold, sombre winter mien it puts the joyful smiles of spring. The grass begins to take on its fresh, bright green, and the trees begin to bud, whilst the little robins, first harbingers of spring, come from their long-pent-up solitudes and flit about the fields and gardens, their chirpings telling of their joy and their presence lifting up the heart of the passer-by with a love for their gentleness, and be he a Christian, a thought comes of his Saviour, as he sees the dear red breast of the birdling linked as it is in legend story with the blood of the Crucified.

On all sides there is activity. The farmer in the fields and the city man in his garden are busy planting and sowing the seeds of vegetable, fruit and flower, that in time will spring up and bring the return of their industry. So the summer will be made glad by the spring, and autumn and winter shall be made joyful in turn and receive rich fruits, the bountiful gifts of their generous sisters.

And thus nature works—or rather God, the great creator of all things and the bountiful provider of all our needs and wants—labors for our good. He supplies the body in its requirements for food. He charms the senses with the beautiful things He lavishly scatters on every

side, and He lifts up and entrances the soul by the joy with which those things fill it.

But there is a more charming thing for the soul than the fields and gardens seen by it through the eyes of the body, and a more satisfying thing for the spirit than that which nature supplies to the body itself for its sustenance and well-being. It is the substantial food of the mind and the charm of its nourishment in the spiritual delights and sustenance that come to it through the supernatural, and it is in Lent that the seeds for its renewal and renovation are planted in the garden of the soul.

This seed, as our Lord Himself calls it, is the Word of God. The thoughts of the passion and death of our Lord, which the season suggests, clear away the weeds and briars left after the world's harvest and make clear the field of the heart and the garden of the soul for the reception of this heavenly seed, which, once well planted, the dews of God's grace and the sunshine of His love make in time most fruitful in an abundance of virtues, the flowers of solid piety and the fruits of a good life.

Lent, therefore, is a spiritual springtime. Let us all profit by the opportunity it gives to renovate and renew our soul. The seeds, God's word, are then sown by the divinely-appointed sowers—the priests of Holy Church. Let them not be choked by weeds and briars for want of our removing them; let them not fall on hard, stony soil by any hardness or indifference of heart; let not the fowls of the air remove the seed by want of care on our part to see they be not lost to us; nor let them be choked

or die within us by the anxieties and cares of this all-fleeting world. No, let none of these things happen, but let us receive the seed, God's words, in the springtime of Lent, into good and faithful hearts, by watchfulness and prayer; above all, by the sacraments, let us preserve them that they may bring forth fruit an hundred fold.

TO ST. JOSEPH.

Dear father of the Child divine,
Give every child thy care and love—
Watch o'er their youth, their lives incline
To virtue's path, that leads above.

Protector of thy Virgin spouse,
Guard every maiden with thy care—
Let none the pearl of purity lose,
Let it enrich a chaplet rare.

Father of Nazareth's happy home,
Whose holy peace we love recall;—
In spirit with God's graces come,
To keep as one the hearts of all.

Patriarch of the Church at large,
The faithful keep from error free;
Be every soul thy welcome charge,
To reign with God in love with thee.

ST. JOSEPH, OUR PATRON AND MODEL.

ST. JOSEPH is, next to our Blessed Mother, the highest in the Heavenly Court, and next to her the most beloved here on earth. He was the friend, father, guardian and protector of the Holy Family, and he stands ready to be the same to all Christians, for we are members of that same family by adoption. Our Divine Lord, by taking our humanity, became our brother; then Mary became our mother, and Joseph our father, and as such we have his love and care, and as such we should give him our gratitude and our love. We glory in St. Joseph for all he was to our Divine Lord and to His Blessed Mother. We esteem him for his goodness to them, for his labors and his sacrifices. We admire him for what he was in himself, his modesty, his virtues, and, above all, his purity, which made him worthy to be the protector of the Son of God and of Mary, His Virgin Mother.

We see in St. Joseph all that we should be. Laboring, yet adoring, hidden and unknown to the world, yet close in the friendship and esteem of God, he is, indeed, the model for every Christian man and woman. He knew the trials and sorrows of life, and could sympathize with those who bore them, because in them he discerned the divine will, and by resignation gained greater interior consolations than his external trials. He experienced

what every confiding Christian ever experiences, that God will not be wanting to those who put their trust in Him. "Cast your burdens on the Lord, and He will nourish thee," so says Holy Writ and time has proved it. The abiding trust of Joseph of old, who fed the famishing Egyptians, shows us the greater power of St. Joseph with God to help all who call upon Him. We all need help—help in life, help at death—and this help we shall have in abundance if we make St. Joseph our advocate. "*Go to Joseph; he will give you what you need,*" were Pharaoh's words to his people, and these selfsame words are used by Holy Church to exhort and to encourage her children to have recourse to St. Joseph's prayers. Let us be worthy of his love and care by imitating his virtues, and let us requite his goodness by having like him a tender love for our Divine Lord and of His Blessed Mother, and proclaim and honor their names.

The month of March is the month of St. Joseph, and during it we are asked by Holy Church to give him special honor and to invoke his prayers for ourselves and for the Church at large. As the head or foster-father of the Holy Family, St. Joseph was its protector and provider, and so the Church places him over all her children, the one great Christian family, under the title of Patriarch of the Universal Church. Let us invoke him as such, and let us place the greatest hope in his prayers. He will be a good father to us, as he was to our Divine Lord and to His Virgin Mother. All three would have us share their love and union. Yes, we may, if we will become the

adopted members of the Holy Family, for our Lord has adopted us as His beloved brothers and sisters, and so His Virgin Mother is our mother and her chaste spouse is made our father, protector, provider and friend. Happy we who are so highly honored, and unwise would we be not to avail ourselves of it.

St. Joseph loves all mankind with a special love; let us reciprocate his affection. He was beloved of God and chosen by the Father to watch over the Son during his helpless years of infancy, because he was "a just man." Let us imitate St. Joseph in his virtues that we may be worthy to be the adopted members of the Holy Family, and so united with them always in spirit, one day we shall be united with them face to face in heaven. To this end, let us invoke St. Joseph's prayers and say often, "St. Joseph, our Father—pray that we be thy worthy children!" "St. Joseph, our advocate—pray for the graces of which we stand in need!" "St. Joseph, our friend—and friend of the Sacred Heart—pray for us that we may one day share thy glory and happiness!" "Good St. Joseph, pray for Holy Church and pray for all the faithful. Pray for us living, and pray for us dead!"



HOLY WEEK.

It is in Holy Week that Holy Church asks her children to retire as much as possible from the world and its confusion and think of our Lord and Saviour in the last days and hours of His passion and death. The Scriptures record that as He breathed out His soul, there was darkness over the whole earth, for the sun refused to give light, and something of this darkness and desolation is felt by every thoughtful Christian soul during the days commemorating it.

Thus the great Holy Week services are solemnly carried out by the Church the world over, and the faithful assemble in the temples and list to the dirge of the lamentations, and prostrate themselves before the cross as it is held aloft with Jesus, the Saviour of the world, nailed upon it. And yet, midst this darkness and gloom and pain and anguish, we feel as we take part in these sad ceremonies, there are a few hours of joyful respite as we visit and adore our Lord resting in the repository from Holy Thursday to Good Friday morn, where Faith and Love enthrone Him midst myriads of blazing lights and a profusion of fresh, fragrant flowers. How the Catholic heart is touched by the scene this day presents! Thousands, yea, hundreds of thousands, go to pay their tribute to our Lord's real presence in the Blessed Sacrament; young and old, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, saint and sinner, crowd the different churches

and gather as one family around their God and their King, and whisper their words of sorrow for any offenses they may have committed against His holy law and there resolve that with His blessing and grace, and nourished by His precious body and blood received in a worthy holy communion, they shall never more offend Him.

Verily is our Lord the New Adam, and truly is He "Emmanuel"—God dwelling with us. He is both for us in the Blessed Sacrament our brother in His humanity and our God in His divinity. It is specially on Holy Thursday and in Holy Week we feel the force of this, and our faith is revived and renewed in the reaction we feel in ourselves, and which we witness in the hearts and minds of all around us.

Let us enter into Holy Week with true religious spirit; it will be a fitting culmination to the Lenten season, and prepare us for the joys of Easter. If we but make atonement for our sins through heartfelt sorrow and humbly confess them in the tribunal of penance, forgiveness will be ours, peace and reconciliation will be restored to our souls and the joys which Easter will bring will be a foretaste of the endless joys of heaven.

Holy Week, as the great week of prayer, brings to a close the Lenten season. It culminates the forty days' fast and prayer and climaxes by its intensity all the mortification and piety that preceded it. If Lent is, as it surely is, a time of grace, Holy Week, then, is a time of the greatest grace. All grace flows from the cross of

Christ, and as Holy Week commemorates Christ dying on the cross for the sins of mankind, we easily see how much more than at any other time does that all-saving grace flow out on the soul.

Holy Church does all she can to prepare her children to receive that grace. Her liturgy is most touching. The psalms and prophecies bearing on our Lord's passion and death are sung and serve as so many funeral dirges to fill the soul with sympathy and sorrow for our Lord's suffering and death. Her altars are desolated to show us the utter desolation that the world knew when its Lord and Master was stricken, and they tell us what will be our desolation also if we strive to crucify Him again by giving way to mortal sin. The blessed sacrament is borne away from the altar of sacrifice, for the sacrifice is for the time being suspended, and the faithful lovingly seek out the place of its repose, to confess their faith and love, and to assure our Lord of their greater fidelity to His real presence in the tabernacle.

What is life without the friendship of the good? And how desolate would life be to the Catholic heart without the presence of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. It is everything to him—family, friends, fortune, all may go, but the treasure of treasures remains as long as one has the Blessed Sacrament to adore and love in the tabernacle, whence we may take our Lord to our hearts in holy communion.

But oh, how all this love of our Lord is brought to naught by those who will not open their hearts to Him,

but give them to sin and Satan by yielding them to temptation. It is in Holy Week that the holiest thoughts come, and the holiest resolutions follow them. It is the atonement time; it is the time of repentance and the time of reparation. We all have sinned before God and must needs bewail our sins and promise amendment. It is in Holy Week we feel this most, and it is in that week we can approach our offended Lord with the greatest hope of pardon and the greatest assurance of forgiveness and peace.

Let us, then, make good the opportunity and improve the chance it offers us, and by giving ourselves up to the influences of that week of sorrowful thought and painful reflection, be able to blot out our sins by heartfelt contrition, and dying with Christ to the world and sin, rise with Him through grace to a new and perfect life, resolved never to sin again.

EASTER.

EASTER! glorious Easter! "the day the Lord Himself has made"! Let us, as the Psalmist bids, "rejoice and be glad in it." For all who made a good Lent it is a delightful transposition. The fasts, the watchings and praying were hard on poor, weak nature; but now all is over, and the soul purified and the heart renewed, awakes on an Easter morn with a feeling of overwhelming joy. We realize that having suffered with Christ, we arise with Him and that His resurrection means our own resurrec-

tion to a higher and holier life. Alleluia, alleluia, is heard from every Christian pulpit, and the joyful greeting finds quick response in every true Christian heart. Peace and reconciliation are proclaimed to all who will renounce sin and atone for their offenses. It is a new era and a new life for all who will avail themselves of it.

What a joy to the world was that first Easter morn now nearly two thousand years ago! Then was the great cloud of sin rolled back which had stood between heaven and earth for four thousand years, that man might again meet the smiles of His Maker and feel anew the warmth of His love. The same joy is ours no less today—if we are in a state to receive it. We need only die to sin to live to our resurrected Lord. He has brought a new life to us; we must give Him a new life in return. Nay, His life must henceforth be our life; for He took our nature that we might share His and be one with Him. Let us respond to the loving desire of our Saviour, and make our hearts His dwelling place and the abiding place of His Heavenly Father, by purging our souls of sin through a good confession and by making them pure and beautiful through a worthy holy communion. In this way our Easter will be full with joy and happiness as much as we can know on earth, and it will give us the hope of endless joy and happiness one day in heaven.

Peace with God was the fruit which our Lord's victory over death brought the world, and this is the joy it will bring to every one dwelling in the world, if he will only receive this peace into a loving and grateful heart and bring forth fruit in patience. Happy Easter to all!

HAIL, EASTER MORN !

Hail, oh hail, fair Easter morn !

Hail, oh Christ, our risen King !

Hail, oh hail, life new-born !

Praise, honor, glory to Thee we sing !

O may the joy of Easter time

Light up the hearts of all the world,

And let the nations of every clime

Range 'neath the banner our Lord unfurled.

Its crimsoned folds give forth the word,

“Salvation,” Heaven’s yours ! From sin be free !

Take up thy cross and follow the Lord,

“Deny thyself—come, follow Me !”

Let’s heed our loving Saviour’s call !

His grace will gird us for the strife,

And “In His name” we’ll conquer all

And gain the crown of eternal life.

EASTER CHIMES.

THE Easter joys are ours, and Easter carols fill the air and our hearts leap with exultation because we know that Christ is risen, and salvation is secured for all who put their trust in Him. After a season of recollection and retirement, we are free again, and after the mortification and self-denial accompanying it, we are strong and resolute to keep ourselves restrained and faithful to the holy law of God.

How the Christian heart rejoices in all that Easter brings! Heaven's doors are flung wide open for all the world to enter; death is shorn of its terrors and the grave is made the gateway to eternal life. Life is made bright and beautiful in the glory of the Easter morn, for it is "the day the Lord Himself hath made." Let us, therefore, rejoice and be glad in it.

All through the Eastertide the Church sings her alleluias to tell the faithful of the endless joy that Easter has brought the world—for Christ's resurrection was our own resurrection, and His triumph over sin and death our triumph also, for He lived, died and rose again that we might one day live and reign with Him and the blessed ones forever in heaven.

To enjoy a happy Easter we must be filled with its spirit, that is to die to sin and temptation that we may live with Christ our Redeemer; living with Him here, by His dwelling with us through His life of grace, that we

may live finally with Him in heaven, where we shall see Him face to face. This is the time of times when we are to nourish our souls with Christ's precious blood, so let all purge their soul of sin, that they may be worthy to receive it. In this way ours will be a happy Eastertide and persevering in the fruits of His passion and death, our resurrection will prevail on to that day when time, for us, will be swallowed up in eternity—and our earthly Easters be one glad, eternal Easter day in heaven.

HAPPY EASTER! ALLELUIA!

EASTER is again with us, and brings back all its old joys and new hopes. It brought peace to earth and renews that peace every time it comes, and will usher in one day the eternal peace of heaven. Our Lord's resurrection is a forerunner of our own—and the apostle bids us prepare to attain it—for if we would arise with Christ, says he, we must not seek the things of earth, but seek the things that are above. Our Lord cleared the way for us to heaven. He rolled back the great stone of sin, and we have but to follow Him to reach eternal life. Easter lifts earth to the kiss of heaven, and men find forgiveness in their Father's arms. Sunshine has been brought to earth where all was darkness before—and peace hath come to a land that knew not peace. The Sun of Justice shines in the zenith of man's universe, and will never set as long as there is a man to save.

No wonder Holy Church rings out her alleluias, and bids her people rejoice! No wonder the faithful hail the day and wish its joys to all! We have so much to rejoice over—peace restored, salvation secured, union with God in preparation for it—supernatural life to fit us for life with the blessed—and holiness and happiness pass in anticipation; in a word, joy as far as this world will allow—with the assurance of endless joy in the life to come in heaven.

Let the Easter joys inundate our souls, and let us extend them to one another. They are real, they are lasting. 'Tis not fancy, 'tis no idle dream; but joy, pure and simple. But it is only the man that believes that can receive this joy—'tis only the heart that loves that can know it—'tis only the mind that thinks that can appreciate it. It is not for worldlings, but for the simple-hearted faithful to find this true joy, which the heart craves, and which, once possessed, fills it with unspeakable happiness. It is only to those free from sin that this joy, this peace, can come. It is only the heart light with grace that can respond to its delightful music.

Let us beg God our Lord to make us worthy to know the Easter peace and the Easter joy, by purging our souls from sin, and so receiving His blessings here, they may be the preparation for endless peace and joy hereafter in the Easter days of heaven.

CHRISTMAS AND EASTER : A CONTRAST.

WHETHER it is the seed or the tree, the bud or the blossom, the flower or the fruit we are most to admire, it is hard to say—or better said, we admire the one when we admire the other ; and so with Christmas and Easter, the heart refuses to separate them in paying the tribute of its love. The one is the promise, the other the fulfillment ; the first is beautiful by its simplicity ; the second grand by its glory. Christmas makes us renew our childhood ; Easter raises us to highest and holiest manhood, and we feel triumphant in our Lord's triumph over sin and death. At Christmas, God brings Himself down to man's level ; at Easter, He brings us up to His. Embracing our humanity at Christmas time, our Lord shares with His creatures something of its glory ; but at Easter the glory is all His own, and so it is rightly termed "The day the Lord Himself hath made."

Let us follow, then, the apostle who bids us "rejoice and be glad in that day." It was on that first Easter morn that our souls were made free and we received back our lost inheritance. Heaven was ours once more, peace came again to earth, and our Lord took up His abiding place forever in the hearts of His faithful children. How great the joy, how great the happiness on that glorious day. For time and eternity its splendor remains. Each recurring anniversary but seems to increase it, and so

the joy deepens as time goes on. This is the happiness each Christian heart feels on the blessed Easter day. It was all our Lord's victory, but to us He gives the laurels! The crown of redemption and the olive branch of peace to be ours forever if we but guard them well. Our Lord only asks in return that we show our gratitude for our redemption by preserving its fruits. He has secured for us the prize of eternal happiness. He asks us only not to throw it away.

Let us be of good will, then, and guard ourselves against the dangers that beset our souls. He will wage war for us till the end, for His grace will ever attend us, that grace which flows in an unending stream from Calvary's mount, and so in His victory we shall find our own. Let alleluias ring out from every joyful heart, alleluias to our risen Lord and Saviour, and let their sweetness find fitting echo in the glad refrain, "*Regina Coeli*," as with grateful hearts we give some praise to our Blessed Lady as we thank her Divine Son for the happy Easter day.



AN EASTER THOUGHT.

Man was dead, the world was lost,
Revived they could not be;
But Jesus died and paid the cost,
And set both captives free.

Man got life, the world got peace,
But what did Jesus gain?
Some love, much hate, not sin's surcease,
For which, He, God, was slain.

And I, too, joined the ingrate throng;
With hate, His love repaid;
I sinned—and madly followed wrong,
His death for me unmade.

But contrite now, my sins confess,
“My peace to thee,” I hear;
“Go, sin no more,” “thy faith profess!”
“Serve God with love and fear!”

Thou died for me, I'll die for Thee,
My days of sin are o'er—
You rose for me,—I'll rise with Thee,
And serve Thee evermore.

So will I love Thee through life's strife,
And thou my strength will be—
Thy flesh and blood will be my life,
Thy face in Heaven I'll see.

Blest Easter day, thou Lord hast made
Thy peace o'er earth extend!
Make men to rise, let sin be stayed—
Thy heavenly Easter send!

ALLELUIA—PEACE.

THE alleluias ring out and re-echo round the world with each recurring Easter, for the day tells of peace restored between God and man, through Christ's triumphant victory over sin and death by His resurrection from the grave. There is joy universal. Heaven resounds gladness, and all earth rings with joy, for the shackles of sin which held men captive have been stricken off and they rejoice in the liberty of the children of God. There is peace in every Christian heart, for Christ the Saviour has brought it through His atonement for sin upon the cross.

Sin it was which took man's peace away, and sin satisfied for has brought him peace again. This peace remains, in preparation for the eternal peace of heaven, as long as one keeps from mortal sin.

How unwise one acts to lose that blessed grace by yielding to temptation. For a few minutes' forbidden pleasure, for the indulgence of some violent resentment, for some deprivation of another's rights or possessions, one gives up the peace of his soul. Again, men unduly seek riches, honors and pleasures, in the false hope that such things will give them great satisfaction, and yet it too often happens they not only make them wretched and miserable, but they lead them to forget God and to sin and so rob them of all peace and happiness here and mayhap hereafter.

Oh, if men would but listen to the words of the experienced and take the wise lesson taught them! Solomon declared everything was but vanity and vexation of spirit, only to adore God, and Him alone adore, and St. Augustin said, "I have sought peace in all things, but in Thee, O Lord, I have found it." It is peace that the soul craves, and this is what God gives to those who serve Him. It was the promise of peace that was Heaven's message to man as spoken by the angels when our Lord and Saviour was born to the world, and it was this promise He fulfilled in His resurrection, for His first words were "Peace to you," and this salutation of peace He repeated to every one He met from that time forth. Our Lord often spoke of peace during His discourses to the people and told how they might obtain it. It was to be gained by following His directions, thus: "Learn of Me because I am meek and humble, and you will find rest to your souls"; "Take up thy cross and follow Me, and you will find rest

to your souls." It is by following in His wake that the great and much-desired peace is to be obtained.

The same is true always, for no one separating himself from God can know peace. No one that will not listen to His voice can hope to have peace in his soul.

What is true of individuals is true of nations. What destroys a nation's peace? Internal dissensions brought about by the violations of God's law of mutual charity, and, worse still, the ignoring of God and the throwing off of responsibility for one's words and acts to any other than one's self.

What makes war among nations? The failure to do justice one to another, or to adjust and reconcile differences according to the law of brotherly charity. Witness the hundreds of thousands that are killed upon the battlefield, the millions wounded, and the tens of millions that are beggared and made homeless, the outcome of differences among the rulers of nations which are fought out in bloodshed. All this could be averted if they would but have recourse to arbitration based upon the wise and broad platform of Christian charity.

And is there not something wanting in our much-vaunted civilization of the day, when great and mighty nations will look calmly on and not interfere whilst two sister nations are trying to annihilate each other! O for the return of the days when the Sovereign Pontiff was the accepted arbiter of nations in their struggles, and he, as the Vicar of Christ, the Prince of Peace, settled their differences peacefully. War is demoralizing on the

individual man as well as detrimental to the well-being of society. It blunts man's finer nature and makes him low and animal in his instincts. Almost every day we take up the morning papers and we read of carnage and great loss of life that follow the clash of arms of contending nations, and so continuously does this occur that one takes it as a matter of course, and as long as it is not happening at one's very doors—or there is no relative in the fray—it is passed by with hardly a word of regret, much less a prayer that the cruel strife cease.

Are we not all children of the same God the Father, and are we not all brethren in Christ His Son? We are close to these same people in business relations and feel it keenly if our pocket is touched, and yet when there is only question of life and cruel death we grow more and more indifferent. This is certainly contrary to Christianity, and Christians should set their face against it. It is because of the lack of Christian spirit that it finds existence. Our Lord condemns this as barbarous and unworthy of civilization. In the old law He said it was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but in the new law it is forbearance and forgiveness that are to be the rule. For He preached forgiveness of injuries, and He said if thy brother strike thee on the right cheek turn to him the left. He bade us practice charity, and said if we did so it would be like heaping coals of fire upon the head of him offending us, which would save our offending brother to us.

To conclude, Easter is the day of peace, and the gratitude it prompts should incite every Christian man and woman to spread peace and cause peace to be known and loved upon every side. It was Christ's gift to His followers before He departed from them. "My peace I give you, My peace I leave you," not as the world giveth, but a perfect peace, peace with God, thy neighbor and thyself. And He exhorts us all to live in this peace, until He shall invite us at our departure from this life to His eternal peace, which He says so encouragingly will be ours forever and which no man can take from us.

Let the glad alleluias of the Eastertide re-echo in our hearts and the hearts of all mankind! Let them sound the depths of every human soul and fill them with their heavenly music! Let the peace of Christ be passed from lip to lip till all the world ring with its sweetness, and then the grand awakening to better things and higher life will be general. With all God's children, we shall be resurrected in Christ our Lord, who in His Easter rising would have us rise with Him, for He said, "I am the resurrection and the life; every man who lives and believes in me, shall not die forever." But to attain this we must heed the words of St. Paul, who says: "If thou wouldst arise with Christ seek the things that are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of the Father, have a relish for the things of heaven, and be not content with the things of this earth."

God grant all a fulness of Easter joys. May they be the foretaste of the endless joys of heaven!

MARY, QUEEN OF MAY.

THE alleluias, the Easter alleluias, are ringing in our ears as we pass the joyful paschal days—and find fitting echo in our May songs, for with loving hearts we greet our Heavenly Mother, and hail her Queen of May. Let us bring the lilies white and roses red, and twine them with laurel leaves and violets and sweet forget-me-nots, a fitting chaplet for our Lady's statue, while with glowing hearts we tell her of our love, our hopes, and fears, as Queen of Heaven, she sits by the throne of her Divine Son, fairest of earth's mortals, asking graces and blessings for us as her chosen children.

The bright days of May lift up the heart and send our thoughts heavenwards, and the Christian soul is made glad during its sunny hours by the thoughts of her to whom its beauty and sunshine are consecrated. How we glow with pride when we think of Mary, Queen of May! Her virginal purity dazzles us with its glory, while her motherly love charms us with its tenderness. Suffice to know that she is the Mother of our Lord and Saviour, to know something of her worth and her work. The Son of God would not and could not have a mother unworthy of Him. She must be by nature all that nature could be, while by grace she is made all that God would have her. Therefore was she fair and comely as the lily, and as sweet and graceful as the rose in mien and in person, while her soul was resplendent with a light and glory that

threw a sheen of brightness over her face and form, which made her more of spirit than of flesh, more of heaven than of earth, and most worthy to be the mother of the Son of God, because the most worthy of all His creatures.

Let us, then, crown her in our May days with the brightest and the best of all earth's flowers, while we give the love of our hearts which these offerings typify. She is our May Queen. Her pure virginal life leads us to strive for the highest virtues. Thoughts of her react upon ourselves, and make us glow with the love of all that is pure and refined in nature, and all that is holy and elevating by grace. Lovely May Queen, pray that thy children may be worthy thy love and thy care!

BRIGHT MOTHER, HAIL !

LIGHT and brightness above us, warmth and genial air around us, and grateful verdure 'neath our feet combine to make May fair, bright and beautiful, worthy to be Mary's month, our Heavenly Queen of May. Her altar is decked with earth's choicest flowers, earth's first and fairest tributes, and myriad lights tell of the fullness and warmth of our love.

Who that loves his Lord and Saviour, but loves His Virgin Mother with a true and childlike love? It is love of the Immaculate Queen that gives to Christian souls a spirit of nobility that lifts them above mere earthly affections and makes their lives breathe of the pure and the heavenly.

Thoughts of her refine the mind, love of her purifies the heart and makes the spiritual triumph over the mere material in us, and causes nature to yield to the ennobling power of grace.

Hundreds and thousands fill our churches during the lovely May month to proclaim their love of their Blessed Mother and to profess themselves as her devoted and faithful children. Do not such scenes send our thoughts heavenward? The heart and mind are at rest, and the soul is all with God and His Blessed Mother. Heaven's music seems to echo to our earthly strains, and our words of glory to God and praise to His Heavenly Mother thrill with joy the whole heavenly court.

In praising our Blessed Lady we are not unmindful of the power of her prayers and of our need to be aided by them. And hence as we hail her as Mother of God, Mother of Christ, Queen of Angels, Queen of Saints, as we do in reciting the litany composed in her honor, we always piously and confidently add the words, "pray for us." As prayer is the balm to wounded souls, how comforted we feel after a fervent recitation of her litany! She is our good mother and is ever ready to hear and help her children. Let us have recourse to her prayers always, but especially when temptation and danger assail us, for then she will show us her power and her love by shielding us and saving us from the dangers that threaten us.

Hail, hail bright Queen of May,
To thee we love to pray—
In life let naught dis sever,
In death be ours forever.

THE JOYFUL MAY DAYS.

THE brightest days of all the year have come, and our hearts are filled with joy. Nature is lovely with its sunshine and flowers. The air is pure and balmy. The blithe-some birds are heard on every side, singing their loveliest carols, and holy hearts rebound with joy and exultation and give renewed thanks to God for the new life and new hope the May month always brings.

But what shall we do with all this beauty and loveliness, all this brightness, and all this joy but wreath it as a crown for our blessed lady, our lovely Queen of May? She was the fairest of earth's daughters, and so should have its fairest flowers; she was the purest and loveliest of nature, and so should have the brightest and best of what it gives. Let, then, the joy and exultation which fill our souls find external sign in the love and devotion we show our Blessed Lady in the lights and flowers with which we deck her altar, as we hail her from our hearts our own, our lovely May Queen. How elevating the thoughts devotion to the Mother of God inspires! We catch something of her own spirit by recalling her immaculate life. We grow noble and refined in our nature the more we ponder and venerate her as our Mother, for so good and great a mother must needs have pure and holy children.

The saints have increased in sanctity by communing with her the Queen of Heaven and Earth, and men and

women have become angelic in loving her, the Queen of Angels. "Thou art all fair, my beloved, and there is neither spot nor stain in thee," is Heaven's eulogy to her worthiness, and Holy Church takes up the strain and sings it to the farthestmost ends of the earth, till it is echoed back from every holy heart.

Let, then, these joyful May days find even greater joy as we give our Blessed Mother marks of our love in the lights and flowers we bring to her altar, as with gladsome hearts we sing her praise and listen with rapt attention to all that is said to her honor and glory. As we tell her thus our love, she will love us the more and ask for us an increase of grace to make us loved of God, and by her motherly care she will bring us to that land where all is fair and beautiful, all joy and happiness in the beatific vision in heaven.

MARY, QUEEN OF HEAVEN, OUR MOTHER AND ADVOCATE.

THE month of May, the month of the Blessed Virgin, and the manner in which the whole Catholic world celebrates it, inspires confidence.

"Blessed is the man that watcheth at my gates; he shall drink in salvation from the Lord." These words of the Psalmist Holy Church applies to the Blessed Virgin and invites us to have faith in her power and hope in her prayers. We are to have confidence in her as our Mother,

for she loves us with a mother's love. In the sacred heart of her Divine Son she beholds our sad state in this valley of tears, and she appeals to Him who cannot deny her petitions for all that we stand in need. But, alas, she sees our sins, too, and if she finds us persisting in them, regardless of her love and her prayers for us, can we expect that we shall have any benefit from her?

We must away with sin and wickedness if we would have Mary's powerful intercession. We must away with self-love if we would have the love of her who, as the Mother of Sorrows, shared in the sufferings and death of our crucified Lord. She is our mediatrix, indeed, for as our Divine Lord appeals for mercy and forgiveness for us at the throne of His Father in heaven by showing Him the wounds in His hands and feet and side, so our Blessed Mother shows her heart that was transpierced by the sword of sorrow from the time of our Lord's birth. But we must co-operate with her love and prayers for us. We must return love for love, and unite our prayers with those she offers for us. She wishes us to pray with faith and with confidence. She loves to have the confidence of all Christians, and with that confidence she will be their mighty helper at the throne of God.

Do thou, O Queen of Heaven, Mother of God, and our mother, look down upon us, thy loving children! Keep us from harm, save us from sin under the mantle of thy motherly care, and bring us safe finally to our heavenly home. We will deck thy altar with flowers and emblazon it with lights, but these are only typical of the love we

bear for thee in our hearts. Do thou deign to accept these offerings for what they signify, and give us thy love in return, and keep us through God's grace ever ready to pass from this land of exile to the home of our Father in heaven.

MAY DAYS AT THE SCHOOLS.

LIKE the pretty flowers of May, the little school children look their nicest and prettiest during the May days. Their bright, smiling faces, rosy cheeks and snowy hands are in keeping with the sunshine and flowers that crown the month of May. Each class has its little oratory of Mary, "Queen of May," and the little ones love to decorate it with lights and flowers in her honor. Hymns are sung and prayers are said daily, and the gracious Queen of Heaven looks down on those dear children, and with St. Joseph prays God's choicest blessings for them.

Childhood is the springtime of life; how, then, should it be guarded and cared for that it bring forth a golden harvest? As the husbandman opens up the soil and sows the seed, and weeds and prunes it **after** it appears above the ground, so the religious teacher looks to the little ones around her, and instills into their young, fresh minds lessons of knowledge and piety, and as they grow, carefully watches over them and removes any word or act that would be a blight to mind or heart, or render their soul displeasing to God. Our schools are in this respect all

that could be desired, and happy are the little ones receiving this nice care and attention. Many little ones come for the first time with the advent of the month of flowers and, like the May blossoms, give a freshness and fragrance to the bright days of the school.

THE SACRED HEART.

“O Sacred Heart, we Thee adore,
Grant we may love Thee more and more.”

THIS is the sentiment that wells up in the true Catholic heart always, but especially in the month of June, consecrated to devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. June, so beautiful in its sweet, long days, so peaceful and so happy in its warm sunshine, tempered by gentle zephyrs, is given up to the honoring of our Divine Lord and Saviour, in loving and adoring His Sacred Heart, which beats with an endless love, and which exhausted its last drop of blood for man's salvation. Who can tell the depths of love that heart has for us? It is infinite, is all-consuming, it is all-sacrificing. We can only have some idea of it when we recall it is the heart of a Man-God, filled, therefore, with love human and divine, inexhaustible in its strength, and extending to every creature made to the divine image.

There is something most touching and consoling when we consider the heart of our Lord. To be loved and loved

infinitely by *Jesus* the Son of God is entrancing in the extreme. To remember that He who saved us, by dying, now lives for us and lives to love us with an unchangeable and exhausting love is beyond our powers to understand—we can only understand it in the light of God's infinite goodness and in His infinite power called upon to exercise it. God be praised for all He wishes to be to us, and God give us the wisdom to avail ourselves of His infinite love.

Let our hearts always go out to the Sacred Heart, and beg God to give us that generous and all-consuming love for Himself that He shows to us in an infinite degree. We will be lifted above ourselves and our poor, miserable natures if we only begin to love our Lord and Saviour. The Sacred Heart affords a sure and easy way—for we know that heart beats for each one of us with a love human and divine,—and if we correspond to its love, we will grow more and more in the divine life and be brought at the end of our days to the side of our Lord in heaven, there to dwell with the Father and the Holy Ghost and all the heavenly court, world without end.

Yes, be it so, but to insure to ourselves the love of our Lord's Sacred Heart, we must strive to be pleasing to Him by having our hearts like unto His, and hence we should pray, "Make our hearts like unto Thine." His heart was one in accord with the will of His heavenly Father. He lives only to fulfill that will, and He was constantly proclaiming it; witness His sayings in the sacred text, "I came to do my Father's will." "I came to

do the will of Him who sent Me, and My meat is to do the will of My Father who is in heaven."

It was this perfect fulfillment of the will of His heavenly Father that ever united them, and realized our Lord's words that the Father and He were one.

So should it be with us, and so it will be if we desire it and ask it in our Lord's holy name, for He has said, "Whatsoever you ask in my name it will be given you," and what better can we ask and pray for than what every true lover of our Lord's Sacred Heart prays daily, "Make my heart like unto Thine."

As the heart is the organ of life, it may be said to epitomize the whole man, and God so recognizes it, for in asking our homage He says, "Son, give Me thy heart!" If we give Him our heart we give Him all that the heart animates: our mind and its thoughts, our will and its deeds. We give to Him, in a word, our entire being, and the offering is worthy and acceptable, as it is giving to God all we are and all we have.

If we give our heart fully and unreservedly to God, He will fill it more and more by grace, so that we shall grow in holiness and perfection and become most pleasing to Him. We shall have the spirit of our Lord and shall grow more and more like Him—a perfect obedience to the divine will, a constant union with God and a faithful correspondence with His grace will mark our lives. We shall ever walk in the divine presence and strive to walk in the path of perfection. We shall imitate our Lord in His charity and mercy in our dealings with our

neighbor, and our goodness to our fellow-men will incite them to goodness in turn toward one another. Thus will be spread abroad the flames of divine love with which our Lord's Sacred Heart is burning. "I come to set the world on fire," said our Lord to Blessed Margaret Mary when revealing to her His Sacred Heart all afire with love, "and what will I but that it be enkindled."

It is this love for God and this love for men for sake of God that should animate every Christian heart. Such was our Lord's heart in infinite degree, and our hearts must become like His, and they will grow so if we ask His blessing and grace to "Make, O Lord, our hearts like unto Thine."

Holy Writ says of David that he was a man after God's heart. This may be said of all God's saints. They had the spirit of God because they desired it, and they co-operated with it, that is, with His grace, and became holy and pleasing in His sight. They were one with our Lord and Saviour, learned of Him and followed Him as He desires all to do.

It is this grace which David prized and which he asked God to continue to him, when he said, "O Lord, take not Thy holy spirit from me," and it is this that all must ask for, if they would hope to advance in the supernatural life.

Do Thou, O God, give us Thy spirit. Send forth the darts of Thy grace and the fire of Thy love into our poor, cold hearts, that they may burn with the fire of divine love and live to Thee in all things through all the days of

this life, and then, after it is o'er, grant that we join the blessed ones in the endless joys of heaven. Let each one say :

My heart is Thine,
Thou art all mine.

HAIL, HEART OF LOVE !

BRING sweet flowers, roses red, to tell our love for Jesus' Heart all burning with love for us ; bring bright lights in myriad numbers to bespeak the flames of our heart's response to His. Let mind ponder and feast itself upon the thoughts of God's infinite love for us, and let soul and body rejoice over the sacred presence of Him who is our God and our brother at once. Let earth be raised to heaven, for heaven has come down to earth in the Sacred Heart of our Lord. He reigns upon the altar ; angels are His bodyguard. The tabernacle is His throne, and all mankind around should be His subjects.

How vivid we can make all this if we only pray for a lively faith. Faith tells us that our Lord is our altar, waiting there to sustain us with Himself. He is there our victim to be offered up in sacrifice for our souls. He is there as our viaticum waiting to bring us to His heavenly home. O Heart of Jesus, heart of love, bind us more and more to Thee. Let Thy presence be our delight, as Thy delight is to be with us. Let us forget all earthly things

because of absorbing thought of Thee. Let earthly loves depart and Thy love fill our souls and our love be Thine.

'Tis thus we can know joy and gladness,
'Tis thus we can kill sin and sadness,
In loving God and Him alone,
And being loved from off His throne.

O Sacred Heart! O Heart of love!
Keep all our love in Thine above.
Whilst here we labor, here we pray,
Do Thou bide with us night and day.

From out Thy flowing heart of love,
Send forth the fire our hearts to move,
And be our light and be our life,
To bring us safely thro' the strife

That war is waging fierce and wild,
Save, O save Thy helpless child.
Shield in Thy heart, Thy heart of love,
And bring us safe to Thee above.

JUNE—MONTH OF THE SACRED HEART.

WITH the roses of June comes the heart's welcome of love to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. That heart so full of love for men, draws men to love it in return. Like the sun lighting up and influencing the whole universe, so the Sacred Heart of Jesus would be the light and life of all

mankind, whence they would receive of His love human and divine and whither they would return to Him their love.

It is of Faith that the human heart of our Lord and Saviour is hypostatically united with the divine nature, so that it loves us with an infinite love, and that through the same channel we may return our love to God and requite Him for His favors. We should cultivate devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is so easy, it is so natural to seek and find our Lord in this way. There is to be had the fullness of that divine love which prompted the sacrifice of Calvary. There rise the streams of that precious blood shed for us to the last drop on the altar of the Cross. There is the center of that life which our Lord laid down for man's salvation. There is the seat of His love, the tribunal of His mercy, the treasury of His goodness. There is His thought for us; His design and plan to save and sanctify us, and bring us to Himself in Heaven to share with us His glory and happiness. To that Heart of Hearts let us, then, ever turn our thoughts and our affections and give to it the homage of our being. It is for men to seek their Creator and their God, and here is the way: namely, the way He seeks them, through His Sacred Heart—His Heart of Love.

Let all our thoughts run there as to their natural center; let all our love go out to His Sacred Heart, for it wishes to engulf us in its love. Thus shall we be united to God. We shall live in Him and He shall live in us, and make us by union more worthy of Him, because growing more like Him.

Let, then, the June days, so bright with sunshine and so warm with life, be passed in renewed love and adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; that He may renew His love for us, and cheer our souls and renew our energies and cause us to love Him, as He does us, with an entire and consuming love.

The lovely month of June has been consecrated by Holy Church to our Lord's Sacred Heart. It is then when the genial summer takes the chill out of the air and nature settles down to bright and beautiful days that the joyful heart of man is bidden to think of the Sacred Heart of his Lord and Saviour, and through acts of adoration, love and homage, to make grateful acknowledgment for the redemption which has come to mankind from that divinely loving Heart. Through the Psalmist our Lord cries out to all men, "Son, give Me thy heart." He has given us His Sacred Heart, and when He gave His Heart, He gave us all. He is infinite goodness and infinite love. He asks that we give Him our hearts in return; that is, give Him our affection, give Him our homage, give Him our service as far as we can, by offering up whatever we do, or say, or think, as an oblation to His Sacred Heart. His Heart gave its last drop of life's blood for us. What a privilege is ours! If it is noble to serve a great, good ruler, what an honor to serve our Lord, the King of Kings, great Lord of heaven and of earth! If it be sweet to die for one's country, how great

the joy and happiness to be ready to die, rather than to offend God, even in the slightest degree! These are the feelings of the true Christian for his Lord and Saviour, and all this he sums up in an all-absorbing love towards the Sacred Heart. Let, then, the June days be made more beautiful through the practice of devotion and love of the Heart of Jesus. He is the friend that has proven His love for us by His dying upon the cross. We can only return that love even in a slight degree, by immolating our wills and our whole souls to Him. We give so much to earthly friends, our time, our strength, our health, our very life even are sacrificed for them, and yet how oft-times it is ill requited.

Should we not do all this and more; yes, do everything we can for our Lord who loves us with an infinite love and has proven it by an infinite sacrifice? O let us begin to love Him as we should in the long, lovely days of June!

We show our love for others by thinking of them affectionately, by saying kind words to and of them, and by doing kind things for them. And this is the way we can show our love for our Divine Lord and return love for love. How often we can think of Him. Everything about us recalls Him, for He is God as well as man, and so the earth and all its beauty, the heavens and all their glory bespeak our Lord's greatness and goodness, and should prompt our praise and inspire our gratitude. We

can increase our own homage and love for our Lord by striving to arouse it in the minds and hearts of others, by lovingly speaking of Him. Let us not be ashamed to do so, for that would be a false shame and a human respect that would be unworthy. Let us do some little kind acts to others for the want of being able to do them directly to our Lord, the Man-God, and these He will take as done to Himself. Some good deed done towards some one around us, some little slight meekly borne and forgiven out of a spirit of atonement for some shortcoming of our own. In this and many other ways we can be always paying homage and love, and be giving gratitude to the Sacred Heart of our Lord, and thus we will be growing more and more like Him—"Jesus the All-beautiful"—for He will hear our prayer, that prayer which should be said daily by all who love Him, "Make my heart like unto Thine."

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.

O living fount! O fount of life!
Bear me up amidst the strife;
Keep my mind, my heart, my will,
Keep my soul; my being fill!
Save me midst the storms around me;
Save me from the war within me;
From all sin my soul keep free—
Save me to Eternity!

In Thy life I'll always live,
For Thy power will always give
Life, to do whate'er is best,
Grace, to keep Thy wise behest.
Light to mind, and peace to heart,
Strength to will and do my part.
Grace and blessing e'er will be
Mine, unto Eternity.

Blood of Jesus, Thou art mine;
Make me be by union Thine;
Let Thy life and mine be one,
That Thy will alone be done.
I am nothing, Thou art all:
With Thee I stand, without Thee, fall;
Keep, then, from sin's bondage free,
Keep me to Eternity.

Keep me, Jesus, by Thy blood,
Keep me by this daily food;
Let its grace my life e'er be,
My life unto Eternity.
Its purest streams, e'er course my veins,
Its power strength unto my reins;
My life, my all, O let it be
To happy, blest Eternity.

JULY—MONTH OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.

OUR thoughts turn naturally to the Precious Blood of Christ, the God-man, in this month dedicated to its honor. How little men think of it! No wonder that the sad complaint, "What use is there in My blood?" is put upon the lips of Him who shed all His blood for men! He shed His blood, the infinite price of the redemption of all mankind, for He would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. But He does not force men's free will. He pleads, but does not compel. Man's co-operation is necessary for his salvation. In every way does Christ endeavor to bring man to realize this, and to think of the value of his soul. What is its redeeming price? It is not to be estimated by corruptible things—gold and silver, filthy lucre—but by the Precious Blood shed for its ransom, something incalculable by human standards, far exceeding all human valuation; something divine and infinite.

Nor was it only once that He shed it, but seven times. First in His circumcision; second, in the bloody sweat in the Garden of Olives; third, in the cruel scourging; fourth, in the crowning with thorns; fifth, in carrying His cross and in the falls along the way to Calvary; sixth, in the nailing to the cross; seventh, in the wound of His Sacred Heart. Moreover, He applies His Precious Blood to our souls through the sacraments in baptism and pen-

ance. It washes away the stains of sins; in holy communion it courses through our veins because we become one with Him in closest union. What grounds we have then for devotion to the Precious Blood! We should prove it not by words alone, but by actions. We should try to win souls to Christ by making them realize their value and the infinite price that has been paid for them.

“O Almighty and everlasting God, Who has appointed Thine only-begotten Son to be the Redeemer of the world, and hast been pleased to be reconciled unto us by His Blood, grant us, we beseech Thee, so to venerate with solemn worship the price of our redemption, and to be on earth so defended by its power from the evils of this present life, that we may rejoice with perpetual fruits in heaven. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”—(*Collects, Feast of the Precious Blood.*)

July is known as the month of the Precious Blood, because Holy Church tells her children to practice special devotion to the mystery of the blood of our Lord during it. In June we have devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; and in July we are to have devotion to His blood which He shed to the last drop for our salvation.

What thoughts the mystery of the Precious Blood suggests! The salvation of mankind through it and the sanctification of the saved if they drink of it often. Then the sacrifice that our Lord made in order to shed His blood; He bled at every pore, and suffered a bloody

sweat; was crowned with thorns and was crucified between two thieves.

And our Lord continues this same spirit of sacrifice dwelling amongst us on our altars. How often He is borne to the most menial chambers, and dwells in poorly-ornamented tabernacles with scarcely any lights or flowers and with but few worshipers!

And yet our Lord is faithful, for having loved us from the beginning, He will love us to the end; He will remain with us night and day, till He calls us from this earth, when He will become our viaticum to conduct us safely up to heaven.

What are we doing meanwhile? Are we suffering with Christ by bearing resignedly and cheerfully the crosses and trials of life? We cannot love God unless we suffer, for love is proven by sacrifice.

Worse still, do we waste the Precious Blood of our Lord by giving our souls to mortal sin? If so, we merit the divine reproach, and He justly asks us, "Of what use is My blood?" What return for all His ignominy, suffering and death on Calvary, since there is only neglect, indifference and coldness towards His presence in the tabernacle? Ah, let us look to this!

The blood of Jesus is to be our purification and strength, our joy and happiness in this life, through our worthy and frequent reception of it in holy communion, and through grace from constant prayer; or, it must be our reproach in this life and our condemnation in eternity. Long live the Precious Blood of Jesus!

On the Feast of the Sacred Heart, a few years ago, the whole world was consecrated to our Lord's Sacred Heart. To Him was given back again His empire, He was proclaimed once more King of Earth as He is King of Heaven, and acknowledged and accepted as such, at least by the Catholic people. But all this proposed love and union can only be effected and made lasting by the sacred cement of His Precious Blood, and for this reason, after honoring and loving the Sacred Heart, in turn we are asked by Holy Church to make our homage effective and complete by cultivating a reverence and a love for the mystery of our Lord's most Precious Blood. This is the stream that flowed from the Sacred Heart on Calvary's mount and washed the souls of men. This is the stream that mystically flows from every Christian altar and which gives life and purification to all that come within its reach. It is the life of every grace, the power of every blessing. It is the vivifying stream that falls upon the soul as the choicest dews of Heaven to renew in us virtue and innocence and to keep us strong and progressive in the supernatural life. Let us drink and drink often at its fount in holy communion. It is there for us to partake of as often as we will. Oh, if we avail ourselves of our happy privilege how great will be the strength of our souls! Our life will be renewed in the life of our Divine Lord. We shall have the corrective which our blood polluted by sin requires, for the blood of Christ, the Immaculate Lamb, will be running through our veins, the life's blood He received from His Virgin Mother will

be purifying us and making us acceptable to God the Father in heaven. We will, indeed, be His sons by grace as well as by nature, and as such be leading lives more of heaven than of earth. All this is ours through the Precious Blood—through it let us maintain it.

“THE FOUNT OF LIVING WATERS.”

How oft the weary traveler, parched and fevered, seeks a spring at which he may quench his burning thirst, but none is found, and, overcome by repeated disappointments, he falls at last under his burden and lays him down to die.

How oft the serious, earnest, high-minded man seeks the noble, generous-hearted ideal that he fain would have as the companion of his travels through life and the philosopher and friend to whom he might submit all his plans and by whose judgment all his efforts would be directed, but vain is his search. These are the aspirations of the soul, and God alone can satisfy them. Life's journey is wearisome and true friendship rare. “Life is a warfare, and men are troublesome consolers,” says Job, and experience proves the truth of both assertions. “I have sought rest in all things,” exclaimed St. Augustine, “but in Thee alone have I found it, O Lord!” It is only in God we can find true peace, rest and happiness. It is

through grace He becomes for us all we crave. It is at the fount of His ever-flowing Precious Blood that He quenches the thirst of the fainting heart and renews the strength of the dying soul. It is by giving us His own Divine Self that we have that friend we long for and that guide we need.

His Precious Blood is the fount of living waters at which we drink as often as we seek His grace in prayer; and His Precious Blood is the life and light we bring to our souls as often as we receive holy communion.

God loves us infinitely, and wishes to give constant proof of it. He has made Himself the companion of our exile in the Blessed Sacrament, and He will bless, comfort and console us as often as we go to Him there. "Come to me all ye that labor and are heavy burdened, and I will refresh you." "Take My yoke on you, for My yoke is sweet and My burden light." "Take up your cross and come, follow Me, and you will find rest to your soul!"

How unwise, not to say ungrateful, to turn a deaf ear to our Lord's loving invitation. He knows that we must be only wretched and miserable without Him and the refreshment He can give us through grace; that we must only faint and die on the wayside unless aided and sustained by Him. He knows that we must be lonely and lost, and go astray and be destroyed unless He be for us that wise and faithful friend who accompanies us on our journey and directs and guides our steps through life's tangled paths, to bring us safely from this dark and sin-

ful world to the Father's home beyond the clouds. And so He reasons with us, entreats us, lovingly coaxes us, yea, threatens us, if need be, in order that we may turn to Him and receive of that peace He would give—not as the world giveth, as He says, but a real, true and lasting peace—peace with God, peace with our neighbor, and peace with ourselves.

Is it not this refreshment that the world needs? Is it not this peace and rest that men are crying for? Is it not this bosom friend and helpful, wise companionship that every soul feels the need of? And all this is had in God, and brought to us through His Precious Blood; constantly bedewing us through grace and given us in all fullness, when God gives Himself, body, soul and divinity in every worthy holy communion. Let us, therefore, be cheered and arise to a new and invincible spirit in God through His Precious Blood, for in it is our only consolation, our true life, our real peace and joy here, and it is the forerunner of the endless peace, joy and rest of eternity.

O PRECIOUS BLOOD! JUST ONE DROP FOR ME.

I am tired and sick and sore of heart—

I am burdened down with care and grief;

O come and give me Thy relief.

O come and help me do my part!

Just one drop for me.

I ask not more, I need not more,
The moment's help is all I ask;
O come and help me through my task,
And through my trials bring me o'er!
Just one drop for me.

'Tis thus from out my misery
I oft must call for help from Thee;
O come and in Thy mercy free,
And lift me out of misery!
Just one drop for me.

The way is dark, I cannot see,
The day has gone, the night has come;
'Midst doubts and dangers great I roam,
O save and set me free!
Just one drop for me.

I feel my spirit growing weak;
The heart is faint, the mind's a pall,
My tottering limbs must lead to fall,
The Precious Blood I'm forced to seek!
Just one drop for me.

O Precious Blood do Thou sustain
My moments in this dreary life!
Sustain and help me through the strife,
Or all my struggles will be vain!
Just one drop for me.

"BEHOLD, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, HEAR YE HIM."

It was with these unmistakable words that the Father in Heaven proclaimed to the world that Jesus of Nazareth, as He was being baptized by John in the Jordan, was the Messiah, the Expected of Nations, and this He reiterated on Mount Tabor when our Lord was transfigured, saying to the three apostles who attended Him: "This is My well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." Our Lord was evidently to teach the world, and this He did all through the three years of His public life. How admirable His words; how convincing and consoling His doctrine, as taught us in His parables. How wonderful His Sermon on the Mount, and how full of instruction for every one. He opened it by telling who will be the happy ones even in this life, as well as the next: the meek, the suffering, the needy, the merciful, the pure, the peacemakers, the oppressed and the persecuted, and He closed by saying that, "Who-soever would hear His words and fulfill them would be as a wise man who built his house upon a rock which neither the wind nor the waves could overturn."

How we should love to read God's words! How wise and holy would we become through knowing them! It is possible to get a fair idea of them as they are given forth Sunday after Sunday in the church, and made clear and

practicable by the comments of the ministers of God. Our Lord is called the Word, the Wisdom of the Father, for He is the means, "the word having been made flesh," whereby the love and forgiveness of God were made known to a sinful world, and which crowned its wickedness by crucifying its Saviour. Our Lord wished to talk heart to heart with men, and so He is the Word, and His sayings are the seeds He would sow in the minds and hearts of men for their guidance, their consolation, and, above all, for their eternal salvation.

So runs the gospel, "the seed is the word of God," which brings forth fruit according to the character of the soil, the heart, therefore, into which it is sown. He declares His word to be the necessity of our souls, for "man," said our Lord, "liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that cometh out of the mouth of God." It is this blessed food—His word, His doctrine, His wisdom—that He would have us reverently receive, and by assimilating it make it our own. How well directed will he be who thus will have his mind and heart on heavenly things! Hence we will see by the sureness of his steps through life that the word of God is really for him what our Lord declared it—a lamp to his feet and a light to his ways.

Our Lord teaches us in every line of the gospels, and we should delight to read them and be glad to hear them explained as often as we can. The Church is the oracle of God, and the priest is His representative. It is through the Church, and first through the Pope, the vicar of

Christ, that the voice of God is known. "He that hears you hears Me," said our Lord, speaking of the apostles, and "He that will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican." It is the gospel, the good message of Christ, that the Church is ever proclaiming. From every pulpit is heard her voice announcing to all the joyful tidings of peace and reconciliation to men of good will. That God is a God of love and mercy and that "He wishes not the death of the sinner, but rather that he would be converted and live."

Oh, who would turn a deaf ear to words so consoling, or who would let the opportunity pass to avail himself of them! It is through His all-saving, all-consoling word, as found in Holy Writ, that our Lord teaches and comforts the world at large, but for each individual man there is His private word spoken in the interior of his soul. Let us hearken to that loving voice ever speaking to us, reasoning with us against our natural folly, and striving to lift us up to the supernatural in Himself. "Walk before Me and be perfect," God said to Abraham, and this is what our Lord would have us all do. This is what He is constantly asking of us, "Son, daughter, give Me thy heart." He has, indeed, given Himself to us, but He leaves it to us to give ourselves to Him; to open our dull senses, to take our heart off ourselves and from the world and give it to Him—in a word, to seek Him and find Him down in the depths of our soul pleading with us, reasoning with us and striving with words of

tenderest sympathy and with flames of infinite love to unite us with Himself here that we may reign with Him hereafter.

JESUS—OUR BROTHER AND FRIEND.

IN the works of the Godhead, the three divine persons acted as one and had equal share, and the same we must say of all their works, for they are ever one and inseparable; and yet for sake of better understanding God in His three-fold personage of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we seem for the moment to separate them, and attribute Creation to the Father, Redemption to the Son, and Sanctification to the Holy Ghost; and we bring this thought home to us still more when we think of our Lord having taken our humanity and hail Him as the "New Adam," "Jesus, Redeemer of the World," brother and friend to all mankind. So let it be, and from our heart of hearts let us hail our Lord and Saviour, our most loving and most loved brother, our dearest and best—our bosom friend.

How close are the ties of family and what strength and courage they bring to the individual members! A brother is a brother the world over. Distance may come between, time may cool affection, differences may lengthen the chain, and yet if there be the least drop of human nature left it will perforce keep the link of broth-

erhood unbroken; and the heart will long for reunion and will hope for a brotherly affection as long as life lasts to make it possible. Next to brotherhood comes true friendship, and so, as the true brother is the best friend, the best friend after our brother, or in lieu of one, is the friend that acts as a brother to us. Both is what our Lord wishes to be to every mortal man. As our Creator we are the greatest object of His love; next to that love He bears Himself as God. We are doubly so by redemption; we are trebly so by sanctification, for it is then that the love of the three Divine Persons culminates in an unending love, since they would prepare us by grace for endless union with them in the happiness of heaven. It is by this spirit life, this life of grace, that our Lord and our God would be our brother and the friend of our hearts during this earthly pilgrimage. It needs only our co-operation to make this union possible and effective.

Our Lord knocks at our hearts for entrance and says, "The Father and I wish to make our abode with thee." We have created thee. We have redeemed thee. We would make this salvation perpetual by our abiding with thee through grace, by our indwelling through the Holy Spirit; and so your triune God would be enthroned in the three powers of your soul and you could pay welcome homage to them in your faith, your hope and by your charity. And thus our Lord, Man and God *at once*, would be our brother and friend as He desires. Our brother to love us, our friend to assist us. Our brother

to console us, to cheer and chide us; our friend to aid us, and to work with us in the great struggles of life. What a strength we would feel from such a union, and what great things we would do and dare once convinced that such a union is ours! And faith teaches us it is so, as long as we are in the grace of God. It is grace that gives courage and strength, and we can say with Job that we know our Redeemer liveth, and with St. Paul there is laid up for me a crown in eternity. It is our Lord Himself that tells us to be brave and resolute and say, "If God is for me, who is against me?" and St. Paul declared that stripes and imprisonment, no manner of earthly evils, should ever separate him from the charity of God.

So let it be with us. United in our hearts to our brother and friend, our Lord and Saviour ever dwelling there as long as we are loving and true to Him by the keeping of His Commandments. Let us go through life confiding in His goodness, at peace and at rest with all the world, because possessing Him, the God of Peace and Love, and serve Him faithfully till that day when He will take us to Himself and make our earthly anticipations eternal realizations in the possession of the Beatific Vision of "Jesus the All Beautiful" forever and ever in heaven with the splendor of the Father and the Holy Ghost.

THE MISSION OF CHRIST.

OUR Lord's mission on earth was to preach—for entering one day into the synagogue, as was His wont in fulfillment of the requirements of the old law which He was pleased to observe, they presented Him the book of *Isaias* the prophet, and He read "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, wherefore He hath anointed me, to preach the gospel to the poor, He hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart." And then He sat down and surprised all by the words of wisdom that proceeded from His mouth. And they were astonished at His doctrine, say the Scriptures, "for His speech was with power."

The world had long since been without the instruction and consolation of the all-saving word of God; the prophets were dead, Abraham was dead, and the people had wandered away from the lessons and exhortations of Moses the lawgiver; and so God the Father determined to send to men His own Divine Son, that they might hear His doctrines, and copy His life and avail themselves of His miraculous power.

In preaching to men He would not be content with addressing society superficially, but would go to its substrata, the poor, and so He proclaimed the gospel to every creature—His was a consoling message. He bade the poor to be resolute and resigned, and taught that wealth was nothing, worldly glory a bubble, and earthly honors were but a show and a deceit. Solomon had all these and

more, yet he declared they were vain. Even had a man the whole world what would it profit him, said our Lord, if by it he would suffer the loss of his soul. A spirit of detachment from earthly things counseled our Lord; that we were to first seek the kingdom of God and His justice and all that was necessary for us would be given us by God.

In a word, our Lord preached the folly of looking to creatures and things created for consolation, for only one thing could console us, and that was a knowledge of God and the possession of His love. And this is what the Church has preached constantly ever since. Her ministers, like St. Paul, are preaching Christ and Him crucified. They are trying to imitate His spirit of poverty and the contempt He showed for the riches and honors of this world, and would have her faithful be taken up with one thought, God and His commandments—and find their joy and happiness, as did our Lord Himself, in doing the will of the Father in Heaven. And not only did our Lord have a mission to preach and teach, but He had likewise a mission to comfort and console and to bring peace and happiness to sorrowed and troubled hearts. The spirit of the Lord was on Him, and it was the spirit of love and mercy, and He came to heal the contrite of heart. Sin it was that caused the ills of the soul. Sin, Adam's sin and sins of the whole human race, had brought down man to know bitterness and grief, and now the Son of God would take and forgive sin to all that would be contrite of heart.

Oh, who can realize all that meant! Sacrifices untold had been offered, victims without number had been slain, and yet sin stood between earth and heaven, between man and his Creator, and it would never have been taken away, unless Christ the Lamb of God had been slain and by His precious blood made atonement for sin and restored man to the lost friendship of God. What a boon to mankind bowed down in grief and sin. There he lay helpless and forlorn with nothing to comfort or console him. His state was pitiable in the extreme. But now the promised Messiah had come and He would redeem His people, and bring peace on earth to all men of good will. He would heal the contrite of heart, and so John on the Jordan was preaching penance as the fitting preparation for the coming of the Messiah, and for the remission of sin.

It is the same today. The Church, the bride of Christ, is filled with the spirit of her Founder, and is clothed with His power. And so she invites all to come and partake of the divine mercy, and is ready to heal and raise up the sinner, if he or she be only contrite of heart. How unhappy for the world at large had not its sins been taken away by a merciful God, and how unhappy would it be for all today if that forgiveness were not continued and to be continued to the end of time! What would become of us, sinners as we all are, if there were not forgiveness to be had after the misfortune of mortal sin? But let us have the proper and necessary disposition to receive it—namely, to be contrite of heart. For this we

must give ear to Christ, lovingly, tenderly speaking to our souls. Son, daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. Do penance and even if thy sins be as numerous as the sands of the sea, if thou wilt only do penance, they will be forgiven thee.

Let not these comforting words fall upon our ears unheeded, but gladly responding to them, let us allow the grace of sorrow and repentance to soften our hearts to fervent and full contrition for our sins, then, indeed, will Christ the physician heal our souls and, pouring in the balm of His love, He will lift us up and bring us lasting peace and happiness.

MIRACLES OF CHRIST.

"If you do not believe my words," said our Divine Lord, "believe my works." "Go tell what you have seen," said He, to the disciples sent to Him by John. "The blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the poor have the Gospel preached to them." So argued our Lord with a cold and unbelieving world. The world around Him had heard of His miracles, and from every quarter they came with their ills and their woes, to throw themselves at His feet and implore His mercy. Countless were the numbers He healed and sent back glad and joyful to their homes. "Their faith had made them whole." Only a few of His miracles are recorded. We know they must have been as numerous as the stars of heaven, since vir-

tue was going out of Him at every step, and St. John says, if all the miracles He did were to be told, this earth could not hold the books it would take to relate them.

He was the Son of God, and as such had equal power with the Father and the Holy Ghost. As man He was poor and helpless and had "not whereon to lay his head," but as God He was almighty, and was enshrined in the glory and the power of the Blessed Trinity. As man He was good, tender and compassionate toward His fellow-men, and sympathized with them in their sorrows, and felt for them in their woes, and as God He was merciful to them and lifted them up and made their hearts light and their spirits cheerful by the blessings He bestowed. The miracles of Christ were performed for the confirmation of His word; that was the all-true, all-consoling, and all-saving word as made known in His doctrines and the principles He enunciated. He could talk of divine mercy and divine love, but He would exemplify them by human mercy and human love. Thus He would reach the soul by means of the body, and thus He would prepare men for eternal peace and happiness by giving them earthly peace and happiness through the miracles he wrought in their behalf. His divine power has triumphed, and is perpetuated as we see through the Church which he established, and which He clothed with power to preach and teach in His name, and to heal the sick and sore of heart, and bring peace and joy to troubled souls.

Our Lord said He would be with His Church all days, and that His apostles (and their successors, therefore)

would lay their hands upon the sick and they would be healed, which promise has been verified by the numberless cases of illness which the priests of God have cured in response to certain souls asking them, according to their faith. Is this not a repetition of the miraculous power of Christ, and does it not prove that the priest and Christ are one, or as the Fathers say, that the "priest is another Christ"? How the people then should welcome and reverence these chosen men whom Christ has called and set apart, as He says, from the rest of men, and how all in the spirit of true and heartfelt faith should avail themselves of their wonderful powers.

In the days of Christ, His look, as in the case of Peter, was the cause of repentance, and His word entranced and held spellbound the multitudes who followed Him. So after our Lord's ascension, the apostles exercised almost like powers and swayed thousands by their convincing words and by the miracles they wrought in confirmation of them. Faith—strong, heartfelt, sincere, earnest faith—was the required condition made by our Lord for the exercise of such power, and with this faith even mountains could be moved. We see this faith exemplified and exercised by the people and the apostles after our Lord's ascension and the coming of the Holy Ghost, for numbers, we read, flocked around the apostles beseeching them to relieve them of their maladies and miseries, and the sick were even laid along the wayside, that the shadow of the apostles might fall on them and bring them the desired cure. "Silver and gold we have not," said Peter to the

crippled beggar imploring an alms at the temple, "silver and gold we have not, but what we have we give to thee, and so, in the name of Christ, arise, and walk!" and the man arose and danced for joy, and went into the temple to pray. The miracles of Christ are renewed and repeated in His Church, and thousands every day are healed or helped by her faithful ministers.

Let us, like the thousands in our Lord's time, and like the millions and millions since, believe in Christ, in His words and in His works, and with like faith let us believe in His Church and acknowledge the divine light in her words and the divine power in her works. Christ is in the Church and the Church is in Christ, and as long as time lasts this union will continue, and Christ will be a Saviour and a consoler to His people. He will show them mercy and love, and shall heal their every infirmity. Thus He will prepare them by His goodness to them here for that union with Him hereafter, where darkness, sorrow and death will not be known, but all will be light, and joy, and life in the possession of the Beatific Vision of God forever in heaven.



“JESUS, THE REDEEMER OF THE WORLD.”

THIS is the Church's divinely-appointed work, namely, trying to win the world for Christ, and to recapture from it and from Satan the minds and hearts of men, through which in their blindness they have been lured away from Him. Some success, great success, has attended the efforts of the Popes, and their aides, the bishops and priests of the Church, and the world has seen the little grain of mustard seed grow up into a great, strong tree, 'neath the shade of which the nations have found rest, refreshment and peace. We have seen the blood of the martyrs become the seed of the soil, and from twelve poor, illiterate fishermen we have seen a mighty Church gradually looming up, until now it commands the respect and the admiration of the whole world. And yet we saw a blight come on all this in the days of the so-called Reformation, when heresy sapped the foundations of the Church and would have destroyed her, were it not for the fact that Christ promised to be with His Church all days, even to the consummation of the world, and that the gates of hell would never prevail against her.

With a love begotten of his high office as Vicar of Christ, the Holy Father's heart is bleeding for the return of all who believe in Christ into the one true fold; nay, more, he is struggling by his exhortations and his prayers to draw them away from the rock and shoals of infidelity

towards which they are drifting. He points out that there can be only one true religion, as there is but one God; and that he that is not with Christ is against Him, and he that despises the Church and its head, despises Christ, who founded the Church and appointed its head. Individuals, the flower of Protestantism, in large numbers, have been won back to the Church, and are giving edification by the holiness of their lives, but the great masses are still groping in the darkness and are threatened with infidelity and spiritual shipwreck.

If such be the case with the sects, how sad the state of the millions of men who are in the darkness of infidelity itself and spiritual death, and whom it is so hard to draw out of their deplorable condition. For the sects there is hope, much hope, indeed, and every day hundreds are returning to the Church, but for the infidel hope is well nigh lost. "Still, while there is life there is hope."

"Jesus, the Redeemer of the World," is the Church's battle cry. She tells all men to receive the Son of God as their Lord and God, their Redeemer and their King, and to find in Him their brother through His humanity, and their God through His divinity—that He is the new Adam and regenerator of the human race, in whom it has been redeemed and saved, and the means whereby it will be brought to its God and Creator in heaven, there to have all its longings satisfied and all its desires fulfilled in the possession of the Beatific Vision forever. Nobly does the Church do her part for the enlightenment of men's minds and for the salvation of their souls; and ably is she

assisted by faithful bishops and priests the world over, who are untiring in the preaching of the word and the administering of the life-giving sacraments. By the people's faithful co-operation we see religion flourishing on every side, and its temples of piety and halls of learning, its hospitals and orphanages, and other institutions of charity rising in ever-increasing number. Still, side by side with all this progress, there is in many cases a lack of co-operation on the part of some, who, while never denying their Catholic faith, are very careless in its practice. It is of these the late Holy Father deplorably said: "Not to know Jesus involves no perversity or ingratitude, but after having known Him to reject or forget Him, is nothing short of insanity."

It will be hard for the Protestant, still harder for the infidel, to be brought within the fold, if those of the household of faith are unfaithful to its tenets and are a reproach to its communion. We Catholics must be models to the whole outside world. We have been blessed beyond measure in receiving the priceless pearl of faith, let us not lose it by carelessness and neglect. All have a mission in common with the ministers of God—and that is by word, and especially by example, to lead others to serve God in the one true faith. If we are faithful in following the Church, we are faithful in following Christ. If we are true to her, we are true to Him. Our Lord himself tells us all to be model and exemplary, for He says: "So let your light shine before men, that, others seeing, they too may adore their Father who is in heaven."

On every title man belongs to God. By creation, by redemption; He made the world—He redeemed and regenerated it. His Church has lifted it out of darkness into light, and she has civilized the world by Christianizing it, and it must remain Christian or else fall back into its former chaos and barbarism. God is the beginning and the end—so Christ proclaimed Himself and said He is the way, the truth and the life.

Though Christ was born over 1900 years ago, He is, as it were, born anew to every age, and every age should hail Him its Saviour, and follow His leadership in His onward march to heaven, overcoming sin and death on the way. He is King of Heaven and Earth, and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Let us then be faithful, loving, docile subjects here on earth, that one day we may reign with Him forever in heaven. Let us proclaim our faith in "Jesus, Redeemer of the world," and accepting and following Him we will have light, peace and joy here, and life, rest and happiness hereafter in the endless ages of heaven. Hail, Aurora of our Eternity! Hail, thrice Hail, "Jesus, the Redeemer of the world!"



JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

AS THE sun is the center, around which all the rest of the universe revolves, so our Divine Lord is the center of our spiritual world, and all religion and spiritual life find their beginning and end in Him, one with the Father and the Holy Ghost. He is truly the "Sun of Justice," and is lifted up in our spiritual firmament to give by His grace, light and life, strength and encouragement to our souls. Jesus, therefore, is the Light of the World. Thus He was foretold, and thus He declared Himself, and St. John calls Him "the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world."

How changed is earth when the sun goes down in the western skies; the shades of night close in on the day, and the world would be enveloped in darkness but that bright stars shed their soft rays over us to keep us in hope till the dawn of another day. So, too, in our spiritual life; with God as our light all is sunshine and brightness; everything is peace and rest, joy and contentment in the soul as long as we have through grace the light of our Lord illumining our path and guiding our steps; but let that light be withdrawn, let the darkness of evil overshadow us, let the fell destroyer Sin cut us off from our Lord and the light of His countenance, let Satan rob us of our life, which is the grace of God, how sad our lot and how the clouds of sin blacken our lives and plunge us into

the depths of misery and wretchedness, well nigh to despair.

Such was the state of the world before our Lord's coming—man was in sadness and despair because he had sinned and torn himself away in his folly from the smiles of his God and his Creator, but mercy triumphed over justice, and Isaiah's words were fulfilled and the promised light came, in the person of our Lord, the promised peace and joy were brought with Him in the sacrifice He offered up on the Cross. "I am the light of the world," He said; "he that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Our Lord well knows the many pitfalls that threaten to ensnare us; He understands the fallacies and errors that try to deceive us; He knows the power of Satan ever arrayed against us; He sees the many wicked and lukewarm persons striving to tempt us and lead us from truth and virtue, and as an offset to all these He rises up in all the splendor of His divinity, and in all the power and perfection of His humanity and declares Himself our light, saying, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

As our Lord becomes the light to all men, He would like all men to reflect its presence one to another, as a guidance and salvation to their souls. So He told His apostles that they were lights, set up as on a candlestick that all men might see and learn from them, and He bade Christians at large to be shining examples of every virtue, saying to them, "So let your light shine before men that,

seeing, they too may glorify their Father who is in heaven."

Our Lord as the light of the world is reflected through His Church; the Holy Father is the chief satellite of Christ the light, "the Sun of Justice," and the archbishops and bishops in their respective sees as the apostolic delegates of his Holiness the Pope, are the lights for their particular flocks to guide them from the darkness of this world into the light and glory of heaven. They are other Christs, indeed, as are all the faithful priests of God; and they reflect the divine light and illumine the path of all who accept their guidance.

Let us be docile children of Holy Church, that we may be true and faithful children of God the Father, brothers of Christ and co-heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven, for our Lord said to His Apostles and therefore to their successors, "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you," and "He that hears you hears Me," and "He that despises you despises Me." Let us love our Lord, for His goodness in becoming our light, and let us joyfully follow in the paths He will lead us. Let His light be the lamp of our minds, the burning zeal of our wills and the fire of our hearts, so that He be for us all that He would be, our light and life, our security and our salvation, our joy and peace for time and eternity.

"I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE."

THIS is the Easter note of our Lord's own anthem in which we are asked to hail "Jesus the Redeemer of the world," namely that He is the Resurrection and the Life for the world dead and buried in sin. It was on Easter morn nigh two thousand years ago that He broke the bonds of the grave in which sin had laid Him, and proudly proclaimed Himself victor over sin and death. This was a final triumph and henceforth He would be the Resurrection and the Life to all men having faith and hope in Him. "I am the Resurrection and the Life," says our Lord, "and he that believeth in Me although he be dead shall live: and every one who liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." In Christ's victory all men were victorious, but to receive the fruits of the victory we must give heed to the words of the apostle who says, "If thou would arise with Christ, then seek the things that are above, and not the things of this earth." For four thousand years the world had lain prostrate under the wrath of God because of Adam's sin. Man was dead, or worse than dead, for he was under the anger of God. He lay in a grave, as it were, in which sin had buried him, and where sin lay as a great stone, immovable with the weight of its four thousand years' duration, against the door of the sepulchre. Hopeless was his case, indeed! "Who will roll us back the stone?" was the cry of every age, and

pitiful the sighs and tears of men longing for the promised Saviour. Our Lord paid the price of redemption by dying on the cross and His body went down into the grave that sin had made, that from it He might cause the whole human race to arise with Him, as rolling back the stone on that bright first Easter morn He rose triumphant over sin and death. As there could have been no resurrection for poor fallen man unless Christ the Son of God had taken our nature and offered it up in infinite sacrifice upon the cross, so there will be no resurrection for any man who will not make that resurrection good and personal to himself by uniting himself to Christ through a full renunciation of his sins, and dying to all things else, that he henceforth live to Him, in Him and for Him—his God alone.

Our Lord triumphed over sin and death in His resurrection that man might live through Him unto eternal life. "I am the Resurrection and the Life." He is the life, therefore, and if we are to have life it must be that we have it through Him. God is the life of all things: the sun and the moon and the whole starry firmament receive their life and light from Him; all creation down to the tiniest blade of grass owes to Him its life from its beginning to its end. As this is true in things merely natural, much more is it true as regards things supernatural. If we have need of God's providence and power for our bodily sustenance and well-being, we have still greater need of His intervention for our soul. For the body we need the exercise of His power; for the soul we require the

force of His presence. This He makes clear when He says, "the Kingdom of God is within you," and "without Me ye can do nothing."

It was for this our Lord, the new and perfect Adam, took our nature, that through this union we might become new and perfect men; for God must be dwelling in us and living to us, and we must be dwelling in Him and living to Him if we may be said to have life in our souls. This blessed union is ours to receive or to reject as we will. Man is a free agent, unlike the rest of creation which acts by fixed laws—the eternal and unchangeable decrees of God. But man can no more live a spiritual life without God than he can live a corporeal life without Him. Of the soul God our Lord said, "I will that you have life and that your life abound," but to make this divine will of any avail to us, *we also must will*. God inspires us to receive grace which is His life, but He does not force us to receive it, nor, having received it, does He force us to co-operate with it, which unless we do, we cannot do anything available for God's glory or for our soul's salvation. God unites Himself to our souls through prayer and He seals and perpetuates the union through the receiving of His body and His blood, His soul and His divinity, in holy communion. This is the sacrament of His love, this is the gift of His life, and our Lord says, "Unless you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you"; "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting

life and I will raise him up at the last day"; "He that eateth Me the same shall live by Me."

All hail to Jesus, Redeemer of the World! Hail to Him "the Resurrection and the Life." O that He may be to all men their resurrection by their rising through Him from the death of sin! O that He may be the life of all by their taking Him to their hearts in pure and holy lives. Let us Catholics exemplify to all our brethren the possibility and practicability of both through lives of virtue and holiness, that, beholding, "others, too, may glorify their Father who is in heaven."

THE SCHOOL OF CHRIST.

WHILE youth is attending school and college to pursue knowledge, should not we older folk pause and reflect that there is also a school for us, namely, the School of Christ, wherein He would teach us the lessons of eternal life? Our Lord was eminently a teacher and He was hailed and listened to as such by the thousands who followed Him. He said, "learn of Me," and "I come to preach to you a new doctrine, namely, that you love one another." And so He taught during the whole three years of His public life, on the mount and by the lake, in the city and through the country, speaking "as one having authority" and "as no one spoke before." When about to leave this world our Lord appointed His apostles to take His place and bade them "to go forth and teach all nations," and said He would be with them all days, even to the con-

summation of the world. Thus the school which our Lord began among men is continued by the Church teaching in His name, and the lessons which first came from His divine lips are re-echoed by the Church to the farthest ends of the earth.

What is the burden of Christ's teachings? It is God and our neighbor. The glory of God, the good, temporal and eternal, of our neighbor. The folly of serving this world which we must so soon leave, the wisdom of living for heaven, the joys of which will be for all eternity. He taught the need of faith, the good of hope and the happiness of charity. Every virtue was inculcated, every vice condemned. He taught the principles of a perfect life and exemplified them in Himself in an infinite degree. He bade men to deny themselves, crucify their evil inclinations and come follow Him. "I am the way, the truth and the life," says our Lord; there is no other way but in Him, there is no truth outside of Him, there is no life but through Him.

Our Lord adopted our nature that we might share His. He became the new Adam that through grace He might "purify to His Father an acceptable people, a pursuer of good works." In a word, He would lift up the whole human race by union with Him and live over again in each one the life He had lived for all whilst on earth. And thus with St. Paul one might say, "I live, no, not I, but Christ liveth in me." This is the meaning of the mass; this the meaning of the Holy Eucharist, sacrifice and sacrament in one, that our Lord might be the atone-

ment for sin, and the preventive against relapse; the acceptable homage of the Father on the one hand, and the coming of the Father and Son on the other to abide in the soul and be its preservation unto eternal life. He championed our cause by assuming our nature, and He would share with us His glory and happiness by giving us union with Him. This is the lesson of life and the problem of salvation that our Lord would teach us, and which He makes clear by the elucidations of His ministers and brings home to the understanding of many lowly, humble souls taught by His inspirations speaking heart to heart. Our Lord exacts of His pupils humility and docility. Ignorant pride can have no place in the School of Christ, for as Holy Writ says, "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." He wishes faith in His teachings and a hope in His promises, and expects to see signs of both in a united love for God and our neighbor. He likes simplicity, child-like simplicity, and unalloyed love, and so He placed a child in the midst of the apostles, and bade them to be as little children, and declared that it was from the mouth of infants He had perfect praise. It is out of our acknowledged nothingness that He is to make us fit to be the citizens of heaven. It is out of our confessed weakness that He will make us stronger than Satan and more powerful than sin and death. In this school the years of life will pass peacefully and happily, and time will usher us into eternity well prepared. We will have learned truth and shall have practiced its teachings. We shall have known Christ and

confessed Him before men, and He will know and confess us before His Father in heaven. Nor will the mind alone be taught as in other schools, but in the School of Christ the heart will be sustained and the whole moral man fed and nourished by the body and blood of Christ. The whole man will be regenerated because the whole man was redeemed. Let us, then, cast ourselves humbly at the Master's feet, that He may teach and lead and sustain us, that one day He may take us to His Father and place us among His faithful followers in the kingdom of heaven.

"SON, DAUGHTER, GIVE ME THY HEART."

I HEAR a voice, a dear, familiar voice, resounding in my ears and echoing in my soul, and ever and anon it is saying, "Give me thy heart." Nor will it be still. It is my Lord's voice inviting me to peace and rest, and tells me I will seek happiness in vain if I seek it outside of Him. There is another voice calling me; it is the voice of Satan, who tells me I will find joy in forbidden pleasure and happiness in sin. One is the voice of Eternal Truth, the other the voice of the Father of Lies. Which voice shall I obey? Shall I obey God, my Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, or shall I obey him who has been the deceiver of the human race from Adam's time, and who has dragged down millions to hell? Our Lord wishes to lift

us up and ennoble us; for that did He adopt our humanity; He gave us the pattern of perfection in Himself and bade us imitate Him. He bids us not to be deceived by the false and sinful pleasures of the world. Our Lord knows the tendency of the heart to go out in its affections to something outside itself; for He had a heart Himself, and its affections went out first to His Father in heaven and then to us children of the Father, and with a heart all on fire and consuming itself from its love He says "Behold the heart which hath loved men so much," and feeling that He alone can satisfy the longings of the heart of mankind, He cries out in pity as well as love: "Son, daughter, give me thy heart!" O who can resist an appeal so touching and so tender?—the Son of God asking for his heart. Vain, senseless would I be to deny my heart to Him! To whom should I give it rather than to God who made it, and who made it for Himself that it might be the dwelling place of His delights, and made it for me as the place where I might meet Him, and find my delights, and have safety and peace in His loving care? Let us away, then, with all false friends and false joys, and give our heart to God through our love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Its flames of love are reaching out to us and are striving to draw us to it. Let us not turn away from them, or put ourselves beyond their reach. In that heart we shall find all we desire—and the joys of time will be crowned with the glory and happiness of eternity.

FREQUENT CONFESSION.

As God's grace is the means of our happiness, inasmuch as no one can be really happy unless united with God, it follows that frequent confession is one of the chief means of becoming and remaining happy, as together with holy communion it, more than anything else, leads us and binds us to God. Although frequent confession is so useful and so necessary to our happiness and advancement, it is strangely enough neglected by a great many, and even the fairly good are lukewarm with regard to it. This can be best accounted for by the fact that Satan, knowing its very usefulness and necessity to us, does everything in his power to keep us from practicing frequent confession. Thus we are led to defer our confession, to put it off for little or no reason, and instead of seeing in it a comfort and consolation we are led to fear it as something to be feared and abhorred.

To the good and holy, frequent confession is one of the joys of the soul; for it permits the soul to humble itself, to relieve it of its fears, to purify itself and unite it more closely to God. The habit of mortal sin and frequent confession, we are told by spiritual writers, cannot exist in the soul at one and the same time; we must either give up one or the other; and as mortal sin is the greatest of evils, separating us as it does from God, and maybe forever, should we not gladly take this easy means of keeping

us united with God here on earth, that we may insure ourselves union with Him in heaven?

We find time for so many things which do us no special good, and too often in many cases for things that are sinful and harmful to us, and yet we can find no time to go to confession. It is a happiness, and happiness for time and eternity, and yet, few there are, especially few men, who go to confession frequently. Now what should we understand by frequent confession? Is it going to confession several times a year? Surely not when obligation, binding under sin, commands us that we confess at least once a year. Nothing short of going every month, or at the farthest, every second month, should be called frequent confession. It is easy to do this; little time is required; the priests are ever at the call of the people for this important work. As confessors they are the physicians of the soul. As judges of those accusing themselves they are the most merciful and indulgent, and as fathers of those they forgive, the kindest and most benign. If any one will acquire the habit of frequent confession he will find it so comforting he will never give it up. "Taste and see how sweet the Lord is."



HEAR MASS FREQUENTLY.

WHEN we reflect on the greatness of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we can fully realize the wisdom of our Holy Church in obliging her children under pain of mortal sin to assist at mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation. On other days, it is true, the faithful are not bound to hear mass, but our Holy Mother the Church earnestly wishes that all her children should assist at this salutary sacrifice as often as possible. The devout Catholic frequently, if not daily, feels himself impelled to go to mass, unless prevented by important matters.

The mass is an inexhaustible treasury of graces.

Be careful, therefore, to profit well by it. Resolve, if possible, to hear mass every day. Do not imitate those lukewarm Christians who stay away from church for the most trivial reasons. A little rain, a damp mist, a little heat or cold, a little moisture under foot, form a sufficient excuse. Early in the morning when angels are descending from heaven to take their stand around the altar, do you, too, set out to assist at the holy sacrifice, and emulate their devotion during the performance of this stupendous mystery.

Do not think the time lost that you spend in hearing mass; it will prove most profitable to you, not only in this life, but also in the next.

See how many sins you will expiate by it, how many punishments you will avert, how many graces you will

draw down upon yourself and others, how many merits you will store up in heaven!

Be diligent in hearing mass and you will find in it all that you need—peace on earth and happiness in heaven. Amid all the trials and sufferings of life, at the altar you will find comfort, support and consolation. At one time it will be Mount Calvary for you, where you will weep tears of sympathy for your Saviour, and of grief for your sins, and for those of others. At another time it will be Mount Tabor, where heavenly joy will be poured into your sorrowing heart and the tears wiped away from your eyes. Again that same altar will be the crib of Bethlehem, where you will gather strength to bear contempt, poverty, pain and desolation. Yes, at the altar you will find that Mount of Beatitudes, where you will learn the vanity of all earthly things, and the way to true and lasting happiness; in fine, it will be to you Golgotha, where you will learn to die to yourself, and to live to Him who died for you. Then will be verified the words of scripture, “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, O Lord, they shall praise Thee forever and ever!”



THE SOLEMN SERVICES OF THE CHURCH.

LEAVING other considerations aside, what should we do as to our soul's welfare? We beg to call attention to what the Church offers as helps to the faithful in this regard. Besides the low masses on Sundays, attendance at one of which fulfills obligation, there are the high mass and vespers. All should give themselves the benefit of both frequently. They are real luxuries, and have only to be tried to be found such.

At high mass, the majesty of the service is inspiring; the music is soul-elevating, and echoes the songs of the angels; the sermon is impressive and convincing, and no one who attends high mass but feels the better for doing so. It is a grand tribute to God, and should be participated in regularly by all His children.

Of old, this was the case. The heads of families were to be seen in their pews Sunday after Sunday, and their children sitting by their side. Those were the days when Catholicity was struggling for a foothold in the land; but now that it has established itself firmly on every side, the old spirit has, in many cases, departed. This should not be the case. There may be times when attendance at high mass is not practicable, but this need be but seldom. Every one should feel an obligation to go frequently: an obligation to God, his neighbor and himself.

The same should be the rule with regard to vespers. This is a simpler and shorter service, and should not be neglected by so many. It is solemn and imposing; the singing of the psalms and the canticle of the Magnificat is grand and elevating; while the benediction of our Divine Lord present in the adorable sacrament fittingly closes all. Many who can go only to a low mass on Sunday, might easily go to vespers for one hour in the afternoon or evening, and give to their famishing souls the benefit of its blessings.

Let us Catholics, by our attendance at the solemn services of the Church, give to our dissenting brethren the invitation to come in also and have mind and heart and soul filled with the light and love of our Lord and Saviour dwelling in the tabernacle.

Not a few persons are ignorant of the fact that High Mass and Vespers are not a matter of choice with the clergy, but generally of positive command from their ecclesiastical superiors, and this implies a corresponding attendance at them by the laity. It is true one is not obliged to go to these solemn services—low mass fulfills one's obligation, and almost any fair reason excuses from attendance at vespers; still the fact remains that one should attend from a sense of piety and devotion as frequently as possible. In seminaries and all religious houses, where there are large numbers, there are both low and high mass. The first takes place at an early hour

and is called the community mass, and all the members of the house receive holy communion at it; the high mass, or sung mass, follows at a later hour, say 9 or 10 o'clock, and is the formal offering of the day. Vespers invariably takes place every Sunday and holy day. These solemn services are the joy of all. The beauty of the ceremonies appeals to their holy aspirations, and the sacred music accompanying them goes to the depths of their souls. No one who has ever been present at a service in a seminary or religious house will ever forget the effect the solemn services made upon him; and the sweetest recollections of those in religious life are the holy hours of high mass and vespers passed in the days of their novitiate. See, then, the goodness of Holy Mother Church in arranging that the faithful at large have the opportunity to enjoy the same advantages, by commanding high mass and vespers for them also. It was the good old-fashioned custom to attend these solemn services. It should be so still. There is more to draw one to them now than in the older days. Ceremony, music, sermon have all improved with the increase of priests and churches, but the attendance, sad to say, has not kept pace. It should be the practice rather than the exception to attend at least one of the solemn services on Sundays,—high mass, of course, preferred. The communicants should try to return to it. At it not only should every seat be filled, but we should see many standing, as the writer saw not many years ago in a certain cathedral on an ordinary Sunday. How inspiring the sight for everyone present! People pray better, everything is more effective, the larger the attendance.

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

Sing loud, sing strong, each Christian heart;
Sing grand, the glories of thy Queen,
For at her death earth had no part,
Since angels bore her hence unseen.
Bore her away to heaven above,
Where Jesus long before had gone;
And there she reigns in endless love
With Father, Son and Holy One.

On earth she watched o'er all mankind
Her Son had freely died to save;
And now enthroned she keeps in mind
Each one of us, from king to slave;
And helps us fight the fight of life
And triumph 'gainst what stops our way;
O'er sin and death, whate'er the strife,
She is our help, our strength, our stay.

But those she helps with double aid
Who on her power always call,
And saints they were, who often said,
"Her faithful children cannot fall."
To her e'er be our fervent love,
Our hope in her will not be vain;
She'll bring us safe to God above,
And share with us her endless reign.

Rejoice, rejoice each faithful soul;
Look up to her, enthroned on high,
And "Watch and Pray," you'll gain the goal:
Heaven awaits you when you die.
She followed in the wake of Christ,
And keeps for all the gates aside;
With God she is enthroned in light,
Loved daughter, mother, spotless bride.

OUR LADY'S CROWNING GLORY.

WE delight to recall the various incidents in the life of the Blessed Virgin. Her immaculate conception, her nativity, her presentation in the temple, the annunciation, then Bethlehem, where she gave birth to the Son of the Most High, the home at Nazareth, the part she took in her divine Son's private and public life, culminating in His death upon the cross, are one and all subjects of the greatest interest to us, and we ponder over them with reverent feelings of awe intermingled with delight and fear, joy and sorrow, according to the scenes and circumstances they recall, but the Feast of the Assumption as the crowning glory of our Blessed Lady's life and the climax of all the feasts that precede it, engages our thoughts and affections in a surpassing degree.

The Assumption is the counterpart of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and both feasts, com-

memorating as they do the beginning and the end of her glorious life, fill every true Catholic heart with overflowing joy. So let us all rejoice every 15th day of August and hail our Blessed Lady on it with sentiments of true filial affection. As we say of our Divine Lord, His glory is our glory, the same we may say of our Blessed Lady. For as He is our brother and has shared with us His glory, since when He ascended into heaven He said, "He would prepare a place for us," so the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin means a share for us in her glory, as she is our glorious Mother. How happy the outlook for all who, by their pure, holy lives, are proving themselves sons of God and heirs to His kingdom and are showing to the world that they are, indeed, the children of Mary the Immaculate Mother of God. Let us be of this illustrious number. We will, indeed, be among them if we cultivate as we should a tender love of the Blessed Virgin, and nothing will keep us to this more than to behold her highest among the heavenly throng of saints and angels, next to the Holy Trinity in power, in splendor and in glory.

O Queen of Heaven, O Queen of Earth,
Madest so by our dear Saviour's birth,
Watch o'er and from sin keep us free
That we may hail thee in eternity.

TO THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN.

Dear Mother, when thy earthly days were o'er,
'Twas meet that earth should hold thy form no more,
Thy perfect soul from heaven to earth was sent
To sanctify an earthly tenement,
Make fit abode for God's coequal Son,
Who flesh would take of thy immaculate womb,
No grave for thee who knew no spot nor stain
Of deathly sin, for which thy Son was slain;
His grief and pains, thou bore a mother's part,
And sword of sorrow pierced thy sacred heart.
Since Christ ascended—justly wert thou assumed,
'Twas sacrilege, if thou hadst been entombed!
All heaven was joy and song and with one loud acclaim
Hailed thee as Queen, as Mother, by every name
That told of honor, love, praise, power, estate,
As star-crowned thou sat its Queen, in royal state;
The Father's chosen daughter—loved mother of the Son,
Chaste spouse of the Holy Ghost—Thy God in one.
Look down, O Virgin Mother, from thy bright throne
 above,
On us thy exiled children who hail thee with our love.
Watch o'er us! shield us, save us with God's almighty
 grace,
And bring us safe through Jesus to one day see thy face.
Then with the court of heaven we'll sound thy glorious
 fame,
And sing through endless ages the glories of thy name.

OUR BLESSED MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY.

EVERY child who loves its mother thrills at the advent or her birthday—because then it can find an outlet for its overpowering love in marks of affection and different tokens in sign of it. So it is with every true child of Mary. Mother of God and our mother! We hail each 8th of September with ever-increasing delight, and rejoice to tell our love, our hopes and cares to her, the best of mothers, on that, her glorious birthday. The best tribute a child can pay to its mother is the promise of a noble life, and so more than anything else we can give our Heavenly Mother is the assurance that with her help pleading for us at the throne of divine grace, we will be her noble, pure and holy children. Let such be the offering of every heart on the nativity of our Virgin Mother, and be assured she will receive it with fondest love and gratitude, and will help us fulfill our pledges by her prayers, that one day she may receive us in heaven and place us among her faithful children, close to the throne of God. Let her nativity, therefore, be the renewal of our own, and so, going back to the days of our innocent childhood, let us take on again their spirit, and beginning from this moment lives of piety, keep on to the end. Our Blessed Lady will watch o'er us meanwhile, and by her tender, motherly care, will bring us finally to the

mansions of eternal bliss. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us now and at the hour of our death.

On the 8th day of September, Holy Church celebrates the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, and the faithful rejoice to begin anew the manifestations of love and devotion to the Queen of Heaven, and give expression to the same by attendance at the services in her honor. We completed the commemoration of her glories with the Feast of Her Assumption and coronation in heaven, and now we begin them again with the feast of her birth.

These feasts in honor of our Blessed Lady are growing dearer and dearer to the Catholics of America, as witnessed by the numbers that observe her festivals. Assumption day is observed universally. One is gladdened by the great numbers at the masses and at benediction, and by the numbers who receive holy communion in the city churches. Similar sights are to be seen in the country places, by the lake, on the mountain, on the hill and in the vale—everywhere Mary's crowning feast brings out vast numbers of her loving, devoted children to pay her their tribute of love and veneration.

In the same good Catholic spirit is the feast of her Nativity celebrated. We realize that Mary's birth was the dawn of our redemption; for she was the promised virgin that was to crush the power of Satan—and this she did, when in the appointed time she gave birth to the Saviour of the world.

We rightly commemorate the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mother of our Lord and Saviour, for it was the beginning for men of their freedom from the demon's yoke. It was the aurora of that blessed day of reconciliation between God and man which found its fullness on the day of our Saviour's birth.

As good sons and daughters fondly celebrate the natal day of the mother who gave them birth, so, too, all Christian men and women hail each birthday of their Virgin Mother, with ever-increasing delight. Let us strive to be her worthy children by imitating her life. From time to time during the year we shall be called upon to celebrate the mysteries connected with her. Let us prepare and be ready to do so by passing our lives daily with her in spirit.

On the anniversary of her birth let us be born anew in spirit, and resolve every day to so live that we may be her accepted children, and as such receive from her more and more of her tender love and care.

We are asked by the Church to commemorate the feast of the birth of the Blessed Virgin. We are led to think of what that day meant for the world. Before that day the world was under the wrath of God, because of the sin of our first parents. For 4,000 years sin's awful cloud stood between heaven and earth and shut out the light of the divine countenance, but with the coming of our Blessed Lady's birth all things began to be changed, for, conceived without sin, she was to be the promised virgin

that was to give a Saviour to the world, and He to be no other than the Son of the Most High.

All the feasts of the Blessed Virgin are very dear to the Catholic heart. Of her nativity we love to recall it as the dawn before the day, the presage of better things, the promise of emancipation from Satan's enslavement, through that other birth in time, of Him who would be born of her, Redeemer of Mankind. Happy day, then, that marked so great a change! And happy she through whom the blessing came!

We who felicitate Mary on her glorious birth, should felicitate ourselves upon being so much blessed by it. And how may we show our gratitude to God and to Mary, His holy handmaid, unless it be by leading most pious lives so that we may one day reap in heaven the fruit of that redemption which she in the divine mercy was the worthy instrument to bring about?

Let us, whilst commemorating her birth, ask of God the grace to be born in spirit again with her. If we seek her motherly care she will gladly bestow it on us. But to be her accepted children we must strive to imitate the perfections of her Divine Son and her own perfections. He told us to learn of Him, to be meek and humble of heart, and His Blessed Mother was a model of humility and of all the virtues. Grace it was that made her so, and grace will be ours to become good and holy if we only ask for it, and we can best receive it by seeking it through her powerful intercession.

Deign, then, O Blessed Mother of God, to make us thy children, and keep us in the way we should walk by the graces thou wilt obtain for us! Let each day be a new day of grace, that by its light and help we may one day reach the heavenly mansions, there to be with God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and with thee, Heaven's Immaculate Queen, and all the blessed through all the ages of eternity.

OUR LADY QUEEN OF ANGELS AND QUEEN OF THE ROSARY.

OCTOBER is the month of the angels and the month of the rosary. We can honor our Blessed Lady through both, for she is Queen of Angels and Queen of the Rosary.

How happy to know that every one of us has a pure heavenly spirit, an angel bright and beautiful from the very side of God in heaven, ever watching over us; that he has done so from our birth, and shall not leave us till death shall separate our soul from our body! Though this is of Christian faith, yet how few ever think of it! We are thinking of creatures all the time, of those around us, and when they are not present we feel a sense of loss and desolation, and yet ever with us are our dear guardian angels, sweetly ministering to us and saving us from many dangers to soul and body. They never pain us, they never disappoint us, as oft do the friends on

whom we lavish so much time and trouble. These sweet companions of our exile are the truest friends we have. If we would only think of them and speak with them often, as we may in the silence and solitude of our souls, how we would be lifted up and would become noble and spiritual in our natures and made worthy for fellowship with them in heaven!

Let us ask our guardian angels to get us renewed graces to this end, but let us ask especially our Lady Queen of the Angels, and for this let us recite daily her favorite prayer, as shown by her to St. Dominic—the Holy Rosary.

In the Rosary we have all that is to be desired in a prayer, since it comprises prayer and meditation alike. It is so nice and simple it comes within the range of all. It is one of the best of practices to recite a third of the Rosary daily; that is to say, one Our Father and ten Hail Marys five times over, meditating at the same time on some of the mysteries of our Lord and His Blessed Mother. What a tribute we offer both in this beautiful devotion! Well is it called the Rosary, for it is chief of the flowers of piety and is fragrant with the odor of sanctity. It is the heart's love and the soul's devotion in one. It is the most grateful prayer we can make, and will be gratefully received by God and His Blessed Mother, and shall bring down on us innumerable graces and blessings.

THE ROSARY—BEST OF DAILY PRAYERS.

IF we were asked which is the best form of prayer for daily use, we would unhesitatingly answer, the Rosary—for, by its very comprehensiveness and form, it is made for everyday use. It is meditation, and that is its highest recommendation. It permits one to pray and meditate at the same time. Meditation, we are told, is the necessary daily practice to insure religious perfection. We must think, and think deeply, if we are to profit by prayer. God will not take lip service, for it was on account of this that our Lord rejected the prayers of the Pharisees. "These adore Me with their lips," He said of them, "but their hearts are far from Me." We must feel what we say, and this we easily do when we meditate.

Now, meditation is a most difficult thing to do well, because of the noisy world about us. It is difficult for the long-tried religious man or woman who is consecrated to the service of God. How much more difficult, then, is meditation for the one who must live in the world? Still, even such a one must meditate to some degree, if stability in God's service is to be acquired, "for with desolation is the world made desolate," says the Psalmist, "because no one thinketh in his heart." The Rosary might well be called the daily meditation for the people, for, in piously considering its different mysteries day after day, one will have most useful subjects for meditation which, united

with the prescribed Our Fathers and Hail Marys, make up an easy and most effective exercise of prayerful union with God.

The Rosary was instituted by the Blessed Virgin herself, who taught it to St. Dominic and bade him teach it to the people. It is sometimes called the Psalter of Mary, for in the one hundred and fifty Hail Marys which are said, there is a correspondence to the one hundred and fifty Psalms. The very repetition of the Hail Marys gives renewed strength to the prayer. It is a humble perseverance which God appreciates and responds to His injunction, that we are to keep asking and asking that we may receive. When we think of it said daily the world over by all the religious and by countless holy souls living in the world, we see what a wonderful offering it is, going up to God every morning through the hands of His Blessed Mother, which overjoys His heart, and causes Him to shower down His choicest blessings upon those saying their Rosaries. The very name Rosary suggests the sweetness of the prayer. It tells us that every bead is like a beautiful rose springing from the virgin soil of a simple and an innocent heart. We give the chaplet to Our Blessed Lady and she gratefully lays it at the feet of her Divine Son.

Our late glorious pontiff, Leo XIII, was called the Apostle of the Rosary, for he ordered that it be said daily in every cathedral and recommended that the same be the rule in all the churches. He prescribed that in the month of October it be said unitedly by the priests and the people

in the churches and chapels, and that it should close with benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament when said in the evenings. He well knew the value of the Rosary as a prayer and hence his desire to reap great fruit through it—fruit for God's glory in bringing souls into holy union with Him—and fruit for the Church in spiritualizing her children, and making them examples of piety and holiness that may influence for its betterment all the world around them.

It is easy to say the Rosary well. A determination to be recollected during it is all that is required to make it a most acceptable offering to God. It is easy also to say the Rosary by reason of the short time in which one may say it—say, ten to twelve minutes—and it may be said kneeling, standing, or sitting, as one desires. Yes, walking to and from business or our daily avocation a person may say the Rosary well, and this should induce everyone to say it, and to never omit it. What a power for good it will be to the one who will recite the beads daily. Great graces will attend that soul, the special love of God and that of His Blessed Mother will ever be his to keep him in the right path, and he will be brought close to both one day in heaven, after he has been so closely united with them on earth. Let us all carry with us a Rosary, and recite it daily ; recite it earnestly every day of our lives.

MY ROSARY.

Yes, take my purse, yea, all I have to take;
Leave but my beads and I have still the best;
Yes, money, treasures, all I would forsake
For thee, dear chaplet, which brings to me such rest!

Possessions gone, I still have all in thee,
To sweeten life, and make its burdens light;
My greatest treasure is my Rosary—
It brings my soul a heavenly delight.

Let them who will earth's foolish treasures prize,
Leave me my beads, they are all in all to me,
In Mary's heart is where my treasure lies,
Jesus, my God, for time and eternity.

ALL SAINTS' AND ALL SOULS' DAY.

THESE two feasts are coupled, as it were, by Holy Church to tell us of the honor and respect we should have for her illustrious departed, some in glory reigning, others in time to share their happiness; to felicitate the former and strive to emulate their holiness, and to pray for the latter and hasten the day of their deliverance. Glory and gloom are here intermingled. Heaven entrances us with its brightness and happiness. Purgatory shocks us with its sorrow and pain. Together they serve to excite our

hopes and fears alternately. As all the elect, known and unknown, are honored on the Feast of All Saints, so all the faithful departed are remembered on All Souls' Day.

The Church Triumphant, the Church Suffering and the Church Militant are united in a particular manner on these days, that this spirit of union may remain all the year round and have a marked influence upon our lives. The lives of the saints tell us of their struggles and triumphs; how with God's grace they were victorious over temptation and pursued the path of virtue in a heroic degree. Mortals like ourselves, of every age and condition of life, from the tender maiden to the man of giant strength, from the poor shepherd on the hillside to the king and queen on the throne—all triumphed over self and world and Satan, and are now wearing crowns of immortal glory in heaven. They have walked faithfully in the wake of their Saviour, bearing their cross after Him. Are we following in their footsteps? They are our brethren, and are beckoning us to have courage to come and follow them, assuring us that if we but try and persevere we will share their glory and happiness. But, alas! too often we let some little thing stand in the way of our advancement—some little self-love, some one thing which we will not give up, is the bar to our sanctification. Let us renounce anything and everything, give up even life itself, should it be necessary, to reach our high destiny. We are called to be saints just as they were, and we may well fear that if we do not try for the high places in heaven we may fail of gaining even an entrance.

One of the greatest means to advance spiritually is to pray for the souls in purgatory. These souls are near to God and He longs even more than they for their union with Him. To remember them is to live more in the future than the present, to prepare for our own end while thinking and helping them to reach God. Of all prayers that touch and move our souls prayers for the dead are the most effective; they do us the most good, for we feel them most. They are the most natural to us, for we are thus brought face to face with death, and begin to prepare for its consequences. As prayer of any kind and for any object is sweet and consoling, prayers for the souls departed are doubly so. We feel they are answered as soon as we say them, for we know God's love for the souls in purgatory prompts Him to release them as soon as we have satisfied His justice in their behalf.

Let us, then, while thinking of the glorified, remember the suffering and hasten the day that they, too, be glorified, and we know we will then be all the more remembered in turn, and helped to conquer and triumph over the enemies of our souls. All Saints and All Souls—feasts allied and never to be separated; thinking of one we must think of the other, and pray accordingly. Then will the glory and happiness of the elect grow brighter as we lessen the gloom and sorrow of the imprisoned by bringing to them the dawn of their release; and our own lives will be lifted up and made better by the union we

keep with both. "All Saints and All Souls"—feasts ever dear to the Catholic heart. Let us love to celebrate them, each in its own way—giving glory to God in our glory to His saints, for "God is great in His saints," and remembering through the Holy Sacrifice and our prayers the faithful departed, for "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord," and "it is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins." Thus let us pray and live on to the end, that one day we may be of God's kingdom, saved, "yet saved so as by fire," perhaps, but saved anyhow—saved, saved forever.

"ALL SAINTS."

The altar's deck'd with flowrets rich and fair,
The tapers sparkle forth a merry light,
The incense wafts o'er all a fragrance rare,
The whole presents a joyous, festive sight.
The gold-clad priest a tone exultant sings;
The young attendant lisps with joy his turn,
The preacher's voice with exultation rings,
The faithful flock with saintly fervor burn,
The organ plays its merriest, sweetest strain,
The chorus lifts its voice in fine accord;
The bells cannot their swelling notes restrain,
The city looks up, joyous, to the Lord.

"ALL SOULS."

The altar's stripped, of ornament is bare,
The tapers shed a faint and sombre light,
The incense breathes upon a sickly air,
The whole presents a lost and sorry sight.
The dark-clad priest a tone of sorrow sings,
The frightened boy in trembling speaks his turn,
The preacher's voice the sigh and wailing brings,
The faithful flock of Death and Judgment learn.
The organ's hushed, a silence drear maintains,
The chanters sing, but dull and sad the chord,
The bells ring forth, but low and sad the strains,
The city's bowed in grief before the Lord.

ALL SAINTS' DAY.

How the mind and heart of every fervent Catholic turn heavenward on each recurring first day of November as he celebrates, in accordance with the command of Holy Church, the Feast of All Saints.

It is then we recall that vast and innumerable army of heroes and heroines "who have fought the good fight and kept the faith," "a great multitude," as we are told in Apocalypse, "which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues," "shining as

the sun in the kingdom of their Father." After felicitating them and paying our tributes of praise and asking their prayers, we turn to ourselves and resolve to strive to imitate them, that we may one day join them and share something of their glory.

Now, it is not hard to attain to holiness and perfection if one is only resolute and persevering, for God wills our sanctification and we have only to unite our wills to His to ultimately reach it. It is God's grace that is the means, but it is our making use of it that is the effect. It is God's perfection which the saints reflect, and so to Him, first and above all, must the glory be, and so the Psalmist sings, "God is great in His saints," and St. Paul acknowledges the same when he says, "By the grace of God, I am what I am."

The saints range in their sanctity the closer their union with God whilst on earth. Thus the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, is by far the highest amidst the whole heavenly court. Next to her comes St. Joseph, though vast must be the distance between them by reason of their respective positions with regard to the Son of God, and yet far behind him must come the next in dignity. St. John the Baptist, Anna and Joachim, St. Elizabeth follow one another in order of rank and dignity, till we come down to the great groups made up from every profession and station of life beginning with the apostles and following down the centuries, representatives from every age and country, each class of which has

its chief figure, like St. Peter and St. Paul for the apostles, St. Augustine and St. Thomas for the schools of philosophy and theology, St. Francis and St. Dominic for the mendicant orders, St. Benedict and St. Alphonsus Liguori for the great missionary orders, St. Vincent de Paul for the charities, St. Francis de Sales and St. Philip Neri for the refined classes, St. Ignatius Loyola for Christian education of youth and the enlightenment of truth-seekers of every rank and station, St. John de la Salle, also educator of youth, founder of the Christian Brothers, and a score of lesser lights.

Then among women saints we have a St. Agnes and St. Monica, and a St. Brigid, St. Gertrude, St. Catharine of Egypt and St. Catharine of Sienna, St. Teresa, St. Rose of Lima, St. Frances de Chantal, St. Margaret of Scotland and St. Margaret of Cartona, representing for the most part the contemplative life, and a St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and a host of others who became saints in the home.

Then there have been saints out of every walk and occupation of life, showing that in all states one may reach sanctity. St. Luke was a physician, St. William was a soldier, St. Alphonsus was a lawyer before he took to the study of theology, St. Louis was a king, St. Elizabeth a queen, St. Genevieve was a simple peasant girl.

There were saints from every age—from youth as well as from mature years. St. Imeld was but nine years old, St. Agnes only thirteen, St. Stanislaus Kostka was but

nineteen, St. Berchmans only twenty-two, St. Aloysius twenty-four years old, showing, as Holy Scriptures tell us, that sanctity need not be of gray hairs, which these and hundreds of other cases prove.

So sanctity knows neither age nor station, and it has been found in the city as well as the hamlet, in the home as well as the cloister, in the shop and office as well as in the monastery, for God is everywhere and it requires only faithful co-operation with His holy will to live perfectly and become a saint. He is sanctity itself and imparts something of His own infinite holiness to those who live in perfect union with Him, and who can say, like St. Paul, "I live, no not I, but Christ liveth in me."

It was by co-operating the saints attained to sanctity. They were like the rest of mortals, surrounded by temptations of every kind. They had the world to contend with, Satan to resist, and their corrupt natures to overcome, but, faithful to the helps of God's grace, they were victorious. Some suffered calumny, others had snares set for them; but God was faithful and would not let their name or virtue be taken away from them. The deaths of the martyrs were cruel in the extreme, and the living deaths of the secluded and penitential, confessors and virgins were none the less severe or meritorious. It is for us to take courage, then, and strive to walk in the footsteps of the saints, and, if we make the effort, we will have the help of their prayers as well as their good example.

Christ is the model of the saints, and his thirty-three years of earthly life show us the way we should live. Learn of Me, He said, deny yourselves, take up your cross and come follow Me. This is the call the saints heeded, and they put their hand to the plow and looked not back, but kept closely in the wake of Christ leading them and helping them to perfection. And as they journeyed along the way they kept united with God in their souls, until at length they reached the goal and received their crowns of unfading glory.

Let us, then, strive to imitate the saints in their spirit of fidelity to grace. God will be our life as He was theirs. He is our Father. We should strive to be His worthy children. Let us be faithful to His designs in our behalf, which are that we grow holy and perfect; in a word, that we become saints, and as such join Him one day in His heavenly kingdom. *O all ye saints of God, make intercession for us*, that we, too, may strive for sanctity day by day.

NOVEMBER—MONTH OF THE HOLY SOULS.

HOLY souls are the dead who have died in the Lord by being prepared to meet Him, and yet not fully happy souls we must regard them, as long as they are separated from Him in the cleansing fires of purgatory. It is for us, their friends, to hasten their release by our prayers.

We think much of the dead while their lifeless bodies lie before us, but with their consignment to the grave they are often quite forgotten. We recall every good thing we know about them, and praise them for it; and we crown them with flowers and unite in their last obsequies; but in most cases that is the end of it all. Is this Christian? Do not the pagans do all this and more? What says Holy Church about our Christian duty to our dead?

Basing its doctrine on the words of Holy Writ, "that it is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins," the Church from the first ages taught the faithful to pray for the dead, as we see by the teachings of the Fathers. If we have any faith in our own immortality we must think of those who have gone before us, and have the expectation of meeting them again in the life to come. But as we know ourselves, even the best of us, do we think we are ready to enter into the happiness of heaven immediately at our death? Or do we not think, as Holy Church teaches, that there must be for many a purgation for a time, when our souls will be cleansed from the dross of this world's defilement and the remains of sin not fully atoned for, before we will be adjudged worthy to enter into the joy of our Lord? Now, if we think this for ourselves, then we must think it for others, and if we would be glad to have our relatives and friends pray for us after our death and hasten our entrance into heaven, then we ourselves should pray for departed relatives and friends.

But alas, this is not the practice with many; at least they do not pray for them as often and as effectively as they might.

Of all means of propitiating the divine mercy, surely the mass is infinitely greater than all others, since it is the offering of the Immaculate Lamb, the Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased, and yet how few, comparatively, are the masses that the faithful have offered for their departed ones. Some few have a requiem on the funeral day; some have a few masses said privately then or a little later; but in most cases that is the end of it; they thenceforth confine their efforts for their dead to an occasional remembrance in their prayers. This is contrary to the spirit, the teaching and practice of Holy Church, which is always praying for the souls in purgatory. Every hour of the holy office, as recited by the priests the world over, every public mass, every devotion, includes prayers for the suffering souls.

Now, what is the practice of the Church should be the practice of her children, and so she teaches them. It is not neglect, but thoughtlessness, this failure of so many in having masses said for the dead. A failure to remember the infinite majesty and glory of God, and how nothing defiled can enter the kingdom of heaven, is the reason why the poor, departed, suffering souls in purgatory are so often forgotten. How wise they act, who, to provide against this forgetfulness, make provision to have masses

said for themselves after they have departed this world! Nor should it go unmentioned, the good for the living that may be done by this effective service to the dead. We do not here speak of the blessings that will come to them from God, who will reward their charity for the dead as an act done for Himself, since He longs to possess those souls, but of the material help that thus will come to poor priests of God, struggling in this and still more in foreign lands, building up God's kingdom amidst the greatest want and privation. Let us, then, have masses said, and as many and as frequently as we can, if we would really love and do for our dead all that we can. It will be the best way to help them and to help ourselves to bear their loss.

THE HOLY SOULS.

WE need not enter into the doctrine of purgatory which has always been taught by Holy Church and which is proven by the Scriptures, old and new, and which is so reasonable in itself, despite what opposing sects may say; nor need we enter into any detailed account of what the Fathers have said with regard to it, but merely accept the fact that it is Catholic teaching and give to it our ready belief, and let it inspire the thoughts in mind and heart which are proper to it. What are these thoughts? They are surely thoughts of sympathy for the suffering souls and determination to help them all we can.

1. We assist God when helping to free the souls in purgatory. God loves those souls with an indescribable love. He loved them in life because of their close, and, in some cases, almost perfect union with Him, and He loved them in death still more because their salvation was secured. And love goes on with impatient and increasing force, the longer they are separated from Him. If there be one thing more than another that we can do to please God it must be to shorten their sufferings and liberate the souls in purgatory, for of all His children outside His heavenly home these surely are the most beloved, since they are the nearest, when we consider the uncertainties of salvation for all in life, nearest and dearest, because with Him, sooner or later, they will enjoy the delights of paradise. Let us, then, show our love of God by giving Him what we can of our merits to return and bring to Himself souls so precious and dear to Him.

2. We owe it to the suffering souls themselves to help them. It is a charity we owe them because they suffer. It is a duty to relieve them because they are our brethren. They are our kinsmen, our parents, relatives and friends, and so justice as well as charity claims for them all the relief we can give. Possibly some of these suffer for faults we caused them to commit, and hence justice of more than an ordinary degree demands that we help release them. Some of these souls when they were in life did much for us. They are our parents, perhaps, who fondly watched over us and provided for our wants; our brothers and sisters, who brightened and sweetened our

lives; kind relatives and friends, who gave us a helping hand and whose goodness and friendship we did not adequately requite. We are debtors to all these and can more than repay all by giving them in their need the offering of our prayers and good works. How often we place flowers upon the graves of our loved ones, there to fade and wither before another sun has set, and how senseless these for Catholics, unless accompanied by the prayers of those who give them. Let us twine the memories of the departed around our minds and hearts and keep them ever fresh and green by the dews of God's grace falling gently on them in response to our prayers in their behalf.

3. It is a duty we owe ourselves to pray for the faithful departed. In helping them we shall be helping ourselves. Their release will serve powerfully to save us. Their happiness attained will be the forerunner of our own. They will return our goodness a hundredfold. Our Lord and the whole heavenly court will show their gratitude for the souls we add to the number of the elect by greater graces for ourselves. Our charity will be doubly blessed and the justice we satisfy for others will justify us before God and make us pleasing in His sight. Whilst praying for the dear departed, we will be made fully conscious of our own sad state which, after all, is in one respect, namely, the uncertainty of our end, sadder even than theirs. But we will be the more mindful to prepare for a happy death, if we help those who have died

well to enter into their glory. The frequent remembrance of the souls in purgatory will keep us mindful that soon we must be numbered with the dead, and this thought will prepare us to meet our God and our Judge, who will reward our charity to them by all the greater charity to us. Let us, then, do all we can for the souls in purgatory, and unite with Holy Church in her never-ceasing prayer: *"May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace."*

In the spirit of Holy Church let us never tire of praying for the faithful departed. The month of November is especially consecrated to their memory. How many have been called away these last few years. Fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters are missed at the family board, and we have only the recollection of them to comfort us in our loss. But though absent in body, they are still with us in spirit, for their souls commune with ours, and we hear their plaintive voices calling out to us to help them reach their God. Who that loved them in life will forget them in death? Let us give them the help of our prayers, that God's justice be satisfied and that they share with Him the joys and happiness of heaven. Let us always remember them, but remember them especially in their special month, and by our prayers and masses offered for them, bring them to God. They will remember us at His throne, and gain for us many graces and blessings. "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins."

THE VOICE OF NATURE.

EVERYTHING about us speaks to us and tells us of a great and good Creator—great, because His works are mighty, grand and beautiful; good, because He has made man and endowed him with the gifts of intellect, of memory and of will, and has made all other created things for his use and benefit. “The heavens are telling of the glory of God,” and all nature speaks His praises. The fields yield their products, and the prairies are alive with stock—the horse, the cow and the sheep. The seas and rivers are running with fish, all bespeaking God’s greatness and bounty to man, made to His divine image.

What is the message of nature? First, that God exists, and, secondly, that man should adore and love and serve Him because He has lavished His gifts so abundantly on him. But is this message heard? By some, yes; by others, no. It is heard by the good of every clime, though the acknowledgment of it varies as to form. The untutored Indian in the forest can only give expression to it as his lights suggest, and the benighted Chinese will look up to the great sun in the heavens and give tribute to it as the mighty power of their being and to whom they owe adoration and gratitude.

But there are also among the uncivilized pagan nations, just as among the civilized and Christian nations, many who have bad hearts and who refuse to give homage of any kind which their natural lights and feelings suggest.

In a word, they are recreant in performing a duty which they know their creation and dependence imposes on them. And what is the consequence? A sinking down on the part of such to a low standard. They become like the mere brute creation who have no reason, but only instinct, and they become lower than the animals—all of whom show gratitude, which these intelligent yet perverse beings do not manifest. And as a consequence this mere animal nature shorn of its gratitude, which some men will follow, has its results in low civilization and stunted progress, for to advance men in both, even as regards this world, there must be incentives and inspirations springing from a source higher than themselves and greater than any of the mere created things around them. It is in this sense that the claim is made for Christianity that it has been the force to enlighten and civilize the world.

Now, what we are to understand by enlightenment and civilization is not mere material progress. The ancients had this even greater than ourselves, as we see by the ruins of what were once the mighty buildings of ancient Greece and Rome. But it is spiritual development, the life and action of the soul upon the minds and hearts of men, which Christianity brought to the world, and which has unfettered the mind and ennobled the heart and made man look up to God, after the manner of Christ, His Son, to give Him the homage of his being and to make all his faculties and his powers have Him for their first and final cause.

Now, let us be definite. When we say here Christianity, we must declare that we mean the Catholic Church, for in those days in which the world was being brought from darkness into light, she was the only Christian Church existing; and we must claim today that she, of all the churches who profess belief in Christ, is the only one who has union with Him, for it is of the Catholic Church, the Church of the apostles, we claim that Christ said, "Behold I am with you all days, even unto the end of the world," and that the gates of hell would not prevail against His Church.

Nature lifts us up to God, and through the natural we are led to the supernatural; for "let us look up through nature," says the poet, "and see through nature, nature's God." Seeing God, we are led to adore Him and to spiritualize our lives and make all things tend to His glory, and so, eventually, that is at our death, He may bring us to Himself, never to be separated from Him. Knowing God, we realize that in Him alone is our end—the object for which He created us. Yes, we realize that we were made not for this world, for its fleeting joys, nor its empty wealth and honors, which fail of satisfying those who possess them, but that we are made for God, in whom we shall find the realization of our hopes and the fulfillment of our desires, in whom we will find rest and peace as, in our final end, each one realizing for himself what St. Augustine realized and declared when he said, "I have sought rest in all things, but in Thee alone have I found it, O Lord!"

This is nature's voice and the supernatural echoes to it, and the Church so defines it for us and makes it clear to the whole world. She is the world's divinely-appointed teacher, for it was of the Catholic Church our Lord said, "Go forth and teach all nations," and "He that hears you, hears Me, and he that despises you despises Me."

The fundamental principle, then, of all teaching, or all that this world can teach us, must be God. The end of all creation is likewise God, for our Divine Saviour, speaking of Himself as God, said: "I am the beginning and the end."

Man, the highest type of creation, for whose use all the rest of creation has been made, must realize that he comes from God and is to go to Him and should ever tend to Him. It is through the whole course of our life that we should be moved by these principles and not when we come to die and must leave the world, as, alas, is the case with so many!

As all nature glorifies God, man must glorify Him, too. Yes, in the intelligent, active homage of man, God receives, as it were, the homage even of things inanimate and those which, though animate, are without reason. It is nature's voice, therefore, which speaks out from every tree and flower, and sings in every breeze that wafts its fragrance on the air, that there is a great God over and above all and that we should ever adore Him; love Him for His benefits and serve Him for His perfections, infinite majesty and glory.

LIFE.

WHAT a great thing is life, and yet how differently it is understood! For some it is the most impenetrable of mysteries. It has no past, it has no future; it is the ever-flying, fleeting present—a phantom which escapes our grasp, a dream which is never realized.

For the mere worldling life is enjoyable only while its pleasures last, its riches are possessed or hoped for; but when these are no longer to be had, life becomes a burden so unbearable that death is preferred instead.

How many, alas, are no more, who, if they had the gift of Christian faith, might now be among the world's most useful citizens, living rationally and living religiously to the God who made them!

One would think more people would find out from their own reason that they have been made by a great, all-powerful and all-loving Creator, and that the longings and cravings which they fail to have satisfied here, can only be satisfied hereafter in His own divine self. But reason in all men has been clouded by the stain of original sin, and in the case of many the blight which they inherited has been increased and aggravated by their own iniquities. Hence, God comes to poor reason's rescue with the aid of revelation, and men are taught to know their origin and their end from God Himself. Now, life's problem is made clear to every Christian man and woman. They know that God has created all things for

His glory. They realize that He has made this earth for man, but that He has made man for Himself. They understand that they have only the use of the things of this earth for the time that they are in it, and that they are to use life and all things in life as means to an end, which end is His own divine self. Who has given Catholics light beyond others to believe in God and to have knowledge of eternal things? It comes from Christ Himself, the Light of the World, and from His Church, which is enlightened by the Holy Ghost sent by Him, and who is ever hovering over her and guiding her. Moreover, the Church, which is man's divinely-appointed teacher, makes known to her children, yes, publishes to the whole world, the all-saving and all-consoling words of God, and gives for their fulfillment the powerful and all-sufficient help of her life-giving sacraments.

How thankful should we be for the rich jewel of sparkling, living faith that is ours, and how we should so let it shine in us and through us, that it might also serve to light and console and comfort others as well as ourselves amidst the darkness and sorrows of this gloomy and wearisome world.

To the Catholic, life is real, life is earnest. It is no aimless existence nor purposeless state, but it has its intelligent solution. Its origin is understood and its end is defined, and if he is faithful to the laws and exhortations of the Church, he finds himself well and happily occupied during the progress of his earthly years.

What is life, then, for a Catholic? It is, as to the individual, God's greatest gift; as to time, the opportunity to prove one's gratitude; as to the future, the everlasting realization of our hopes and desires. No one can realize as much as a good, practical Catholic the joys of loving and serving God, in whom, like the apostle, "he lives, moves and has his being." His religion is not a mere Sunday observance, but is a matter of everyday life, for he is present at least in spirit with the offering of the daily sacrifice, and he visits his Lord frequently in His real presence in the tabernacle of the altar. To such a one his religion is the most consoling thing in life. It is, indeed, his very life and for it he would renounce all things, even life itself, rather than part with it, and what an effect has such a way of living upon the life of him who practices it! He is always in happiness. If he has sorrows, he has graces which console him; if he has cares, he feels God's hand sustaining him; if he succeeds in his enterprises, he is not carried away; if he fails, he is not cast down. Such a one is ever united to God in his affections and his will, and he experiences the joy of this union. Life for such a one is shorn of its irksomeness, for he rises superior to its trials and he is not overcome by its ennui. He is strong in his Creator and brave in his Redeemer, while he abides calmly in the Holy Ghost, who by grace lives and reigns in his soul. Life is for him just what it is—a beginning, but without an end—for death he considers as but the gateway to eternal happiness.

Is it not the part of the strong to help the weak? Let every Catholic, then, help his neighbor to live for God and eternity by living well himself. Then will his neighbor behold in him, through the peace and happiness that are his, the solution of life and life's problem. That God is its author and God is its end, and that He has created all things; but that He made man for Himself and placed him here to love and serve Him for a little while, and then to reign with Him forever hereafter.

This is life as God made it. Let all live it accordingly, for, as the poet says—

“Life is real, life is earnest,
And our hearts, though strong and brave,
Still like muffled drums are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.”

LIFE'S DUTIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

APART from the mere condition of living, man has duties to fulfill and opportunities to embrace. Brute creation lives and acts by fixed laws; but man is a rational animal and is guided and directed by reason. It is because man has reason that God, his Creator, assigns him duties to fulfill and affords him opportunities which he should embrace, and it is upon the matter of his discharging his obligations as to both that will rest man's happiness here as well as hereafter.

As regards himself, man's first duty is to labor. Reason suggests it as a necessity for self-preservation

and revelation commands it as a payment of the penalty of original sin, as we read God's words to Adam, "Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy brow."

Man is also to take care of his life. He must not expose it to dangers unnecessarily; he must not neglect the needs of his body, nor fail to give it due rest and relaxation, for man is not the owner of his life but only its custodian, and it is decreed by God, who is life's owner by reason of having created it, that man one day will have to return his life to Him and make strict accounting for the care he has given it and for the use he has made of it.

But man's first duty regards God, to whom he is to give the service of the nobler parts of his nature, namely, of his mind, his heart; in a word; the homage of his soul. To think of Him, to love Him, and to adore and serve Him with all the powers of his being. A consequence of the love man is to have for his Maker is the love man is to have for his fellow-man, made, like himself, to God's image and equally with him the recipient of divine love and favor. Hence, the duty of loving God and the duty of loving our neighbor are correlative, and our Lord Himself declared that man is to love God for His own sake and to love his neighbor as himself for the love of God. Love, says St. Paul, is the fulfillment of the law. Let us, then, be inspired with this duty of love—

To God, our neighbor, self be true,
And we will our whole duty do.

The opportunities of fulfilling our duties in a high degree are, we may say, equal for all, for all can at least

have the will to so perform them, though some may not have the chance to do so, and God, who is just, will take the will for the deed and reward us accordingly. For example, one may labor more because he has more strength, another may do more actual charity in almsgiving because he has more money; another may pray more, because, like religious, he has more time; but every man can and should have the will to do everything that any other is doing in the way of living perfectly, for God is no distinguisher of persons; He wishes the sanctification and perfection of all, and gives to all the opportunities, at least in spirit, to attain to this high degree.

But the actual opportunities for loving God and loving our neighbor are almost infinite in number for all. We can love God all the time and we can show our love by positive acts, namely, in keeping His commandments. This is God's appointed way, for He said through His divine Son, "If you love Me keep My commandments." We are to keep them in little things as well as in great ones, and keep them all the time. For this we have only to show we desire to do so—have good will and do our best, and God will help us to serve Him perfectly by the help of His grace. For let us always remember that His grace is necessary and that without its assistance we not only could do no good, but would neither have the inspiration nor the desire.

And, then, with regard to our neighbor, there are so many ways in which all can show their love towards one another. We do not always think of it, but the common

civilities of everyday life are a large part of the performance of this divinely-enjoined love. We need not great opportunities nor great occasions in which to show this love, but just such as present themselves, for even the cup of cold water given in His name, says our Divine Lord, will not go without its reward. But how much more we all can do. Alms for the needy, patience and prayer for the erring, mutual forbearance in our infirmities of temper and disposition—in one and in a thousand ways we can show our love for one another, and in this way show our love for God, for what good we do to others He takes as done to Himself and will give us the reward—greater love here, and if we so persevere to the end, His eternal love hereafter.

Let us, then, show our gratitude to God for having created us, by faithfully living up to the object for which He created us, namely, to love and serve Him, and to love and serve one another. God made us because He loves us, for He says of each one of us, "I have loved thee with an eternal love"—and this principle of divine love is what He has implanted in us most, that we might exercise it in turn towards Himself and towards one another. Let us, then, show ourselves as the true children of God by the love we give Him and the love and goodness we extend towards all, for as our Lord said, "by this shall ye show yourselves to be My disciples, that ye love one another."

Love, then, makes up life's duties, love suggests its opportunities. Let us be faithful in living *the life of love*.

HEAVEN OUR HOME.

WHERE God is, there must man be if he would know the happiness which his heart craves, for nothing here satisfies him, nor could he ever feel satisfied till he is in possession of God forever. And so we look up to the heavens and feel we see our home and long to be with the God that made us. Earthly glory fades into nothingness when we think of the eternal and infinite glory of heaven. We realize that all terrestrial things are passing away and that we are passing with them, and so good men put forth their best efforts to make their end secure and, like the apostle, they declare, "We have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come." "Where," to continue St. Paul's words, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath in store for them who love Him."

How differently men look upon the future. Some say there is no future life, others acknowledge it and strive to prepare themselves for it, while a vast number fail to give God the slightest recognition, while counting presumptuously on His goodness that He will one day bring them to Himself and to happiness eternal.

How many, alas, are without any thought or hope of heaven, and for that reason gloat themselves with the things of earth! Their appetites are glutted, their passions are indulged as far as they dare, they live selfishly for self and do nothing but what will bring them gain or

gratification of some kind or other, for they feel that what they are to get must be got here, and as they realize life is fast running away, they run recklessly headlong to get all that they can from it before death brings it to a long last close.

Alas, how foolishly they act! If such men would but look around them, view all the beautiful things of nature: the earth with its bounteous products for their sustenance; the heavens above them with the glorious sun shining by day and the moon and the stars giving light by night, should they not rise from these great blessings of creation and find the glorious and gracious and good Creator of all these things in an infinite and kind and loving God, who has bestowed on man these things for his mortal existence in preparation for an immortality of everlasting peace and happiness, and to cause him to love and serve Him and keep His law, which He hath written in every human heart?

The poor, benighted Indian will speak of peace and rest with the great Father, and few of even those who are steeped in ignorance and darkness as to things spiritual, but what have some hope, dim though it may be, of a future life where there will be rest and peace and happiness, such as they did not find in this world. And these hopes influence to some degree their present life and move them to follow a rule of morality, crude and changeable though it must necessarily be. God's law is written on their hearts, and its presence reveals itself from time to time, according to various circumstances.

But how different with the Christian who has the light of revelation to illumine his mind and feels the power of grace to influence his heart and strengthen his will! For him God is near and he sees Him with the eyes of faith. He has the divine word instructing him in the way he should go, and he has the holy sacraments to strengthen him on the road to eternal life. Such a one realizes that he is not made for this world, but for a life to come, and he strives to live up to a standard of morality that will one day entitle him to be admitted to God, never to be separated from Him.

But do not the enlightened owe a duty to the less favored, namely, by their lives of perfection to be an example for their instruction? And this is what our Lord meant when He said to His followers, "So let your light shine that others, seeing, they, too, may glorify their Father who is in heaven."

In this regard should not we Catholics perfect ourselves by the frequent worthy reception of the sacraments, and then give example to all of the highest perfection and virtue, making God known and loved, because of our own constant acknowledgment of Him and our own perfect love?

Is it not with us often as it is with most others always, that we are taken up so much with the things of this world, its wealth, its honors, its pleasures, that we lose sight, at least for the time, of heaven? Do we not sometimes let the spirit of this world and its principles take hold of us, which causes us to lose the spirit and relish

for the things of God and eternity? And so, like the mere worldling, we will run after the things of everyday life which evade our grasp, or if we get them, find that they prove vain and unsatisfactory and endanger our soul's salvation, like so many have.

Our Lord warns us against this folly and tells us we cannot serve two masters—God and Mammon. We must choose one or the other. He tells us what would it profit if we gained the whole world and lost our soul, and He bids us not to run after the riches of this world which prove eternal ruin to so many, but that we should do good with the means He gives us by helping our less favored brethren; in a word, that we should lay up our treasures in heaven by living well and doing good, where the moth doth not enter nor the rust consume.

Let us heed the words of our Divine Lord and Master. Let us keep united with Him in these the days of our pilgrimage. He will be the companion of our exile if we will give Him our heart for His abode, and He will speak with us and console and encourage us on the way. Finally, when life's journey is over, we will pass to our heavenly home, to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, our triune God, to live and reign with them forever and ever.



"HIS MERCY IS ABOVE ALL HIS WORKS."

How comforting to poor, weak, wayward humanity is the thought that God is a God of love and mercy! He pities man and bears with his infirmities. Holy Writ tells us that the bruised reed He will not break, and the smoking flax He will not quench. And yet God chastiseth the sinner, but He does so more out of love than out of wrath. He even sends humiliations and trials to the just that He may purify them and render them more pleasing in His sight. But in all that He sends us, whether for our punishment or purification, God sends for our good, for He is ever our Father, the God of love and mercy. "His mercy surpasses His justice, His mercy is above all His works."

"How good and sweet is Thy spirit, O Lord, in all things," says the Book of Wisdom, and continuing it addresses Him and says: "Thou chastiseth them that err, little by little; and admonisheth them, and speaketh to them concerning the things wherein they offend—that leaving their wickedness they may believe in thee, O Lord." In other words, God is kind and merciful to the erring one and tries to draw him back to the right path by little trials which He sends him. He covers the sinner with confusion, and in the bitterness of the remorse that he feels he is often led to give up his evil ways. God

shows loving patience and almost inexhaustible mercy towards those offending Him, for "He wishes not the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live."

How often do we see this exemplified: a man will keep on sinning year after year, and God is patient and strives in divers ways to draw him from his sinfulness, now by heaping favors on him and again by sending him trials; now by sending across his path some good influence, again by showing to him in the fate of another what he himself may expect unless he change from his course. It may be the influence of a good wife or the innocence of a loving child that God uses to try to lead the sinful man to repentance and reform. Sometimes it is through the prayers and tears of a holy mother, as was the case in the conversion of St. Augustine, that the sinner is brought to bewail his sins and begin to amend his life. It is, perchance, when thrown on a bed of sickness, sometimes the result of his excesses, that the violator of God's commandments takes the opportunity to look into his life and by correspondence with the grace he is then receiving is brought to the practice of virtue.

Our Lord exemplifies in the parable of the prodigal son, God's readiness to forgive and receive back the repentant sinner. A certain man, says He, had two sons. The younger wished to become his own master and asked his father to give him whatever would fall to his share. He went off into a distant country and soon squandered his portion in libertinism and debauchery. To save him-

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self from starving he was forced to take the position of a swineherd, and had only husks, in common with them, for his food. His very wretchedness set him to thinking, and with cries, he exclaimed, "How many servants there are in my father's house, while I am here perishing with hunger. I will arise and go to my father, and I will acknowledge to him my sinfulness and I shall say: Father, forgive me my sins. I am not worthy to be called thy son, but take me among thy hired servants." And so he arose and went back to his father, who, seeing him coming, ran out to meet him and clasped him to his bosom. And the father said to his servants: "Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry—because this my son was dead and is come to life again, was lost and is found." And thus are the words of the Book of Wisdom (chap. xv.) verified, as we see from the text: "Thou, our God, art gracious and true, patient and ordering all things in mercy, for if we sin, we are Thine, knowing Thy greatness; and if we sin not, we know that we are counted with Thee; for to know Thee is perfect justice, and to know Thy justice and Thy power is the root of immortality."

Thus God strives to draw men to himself if they are separated from Him, or to hold them if already united to Him. If they are in sin He goads them and strives to quicken conscience; if they are walking in the paths of

virtue He makes them taste more and more the delights of serving Him.

To recognize God is life's first duty, and to love and serve Him nature's first law. Faithful to both, we will gain for ourselves happiness here and eternal joy hereafter. But, alas, the siren voice of sin sets men asleep and the world's giddy whirl dizzies their minds and makes them forget their origin and their destiny. They are blinded by the world's glare, and do not see the on-rushing of eternity. And the words of the Psalmist are found to be all too true: "With desolation is the world made desolate because no one thinketh in his heart."

But what profiteth all this rush for wealth, all this striving for position and place, all this hungering for pleasure? Will any or all these things bring peace or happiness to us? No, a thousand times no! Happiness is not to be found in riches, as men confess who have them in abundance. Happiness is not to be found in this world's high places and honors—for those who have them are still unhappy. Nor is happiness, real, genuine, self-satisfying happiness, to be found in pleasures, for they bring only bitterness and remorse. Be virtuous and you will be happy, is an old and true saying, and there can be no real happiness without the practice of virtue. God is infinite joy, peace and happiness, and none of these things can be found outside of Him. Therefore, to keep His law is to find happiness, for He said, "Take my yoke upon you, for my yoke is sweet and my burden is

light." So the just man knows happiness even 'midst the miseries of this world, for he possesses peace, and he helps to make others happy by sharing it with them. "The peace of God be to you," was an old Christian salutation, and the same is still uttered in spirit to the whole world by every God-fearing Christian heart.

How heavy and galling is Satan's yoke, and what veritable slaves are they who wear it? How sad the lot of those who sip this world's pleasures, how bitter the dregs of her poisoned cup, as find her foolish votaries! How debased and degraded is the state of those who yield to the low cravings of fallen nature! Truly "the way of the transgressor is hard." The just, God-fearing man knows nothing of these miseries, but finds delight and peace and happiness in loving God and keeping His commandments. "Vanity of vanity and all is vanity and vexation of spirit," exclaimed Solomon, "unless to serve God and Him alone adore."

And so, to return to our first thought, let us remember God's mercy is infinite and if one finds that he has grievously sinned against Him and must confess that he is not worthy to be called His child, still let him go humbly before Him, and confessing and repenting his sin, and promising with His grace amendment, he will be graciously forgiven, and God will lift him up in His mercy, and shall say: "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee, go thy way and sin no more!"

“GIVE ME WISDOM!”

THUS prayed Solomon, and thus must pray every man who would hope to please God. It is a confession of spiritual blindness, an acknowledgment of defective reasoning, a declaration of weak and wayward will, and through all which we must easily go astray unless divine wisdom comes to our assistance and keeps us in the narrow road that leads to eternal life.

Hence, Solomon exclaimed to God, “Who shall know thy thought except Thou give wisdom and send thy Holy Spirit from above?” It is something which must come from God and hence must be asked and prayed for. It is not earthly knowledge, it is not human understanding; it is something far above all this; it is, as the Book of Wisdom declares, a vapor of the power of God, and a certain emanation of the glory of the Almighty God.

It gives to those who receive it something of its own transcendent qualities. For infinite wisdom is gentle, kind, steadfast, and such do they become in a degree commensurate with human capacity who are animated by its power. It is necessary that we have something of this heavenly wisdom and be guided and influenced by it; for the scriptures tell us that God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom. It is, therefore, what we must strive to possess by asking it of God every day of our lives, for each day is a new start on the road of life, and each hour knows a fresh struggle with the obstacles

that we meet on it. And thus the wise man acted, for he says, "Her have I loved and have sought her out from my youth; for it is she that teacheth the knowledge of God and is the chooser of His works." Wisdom enlightens and directs us if we put ourselves under its power. It shows us the difference between heavenly treasures and earthly riches, for wisdom itself is the treasure of treasures. It is of all knowledge the greatest and best. It is the justest conception of duty to God, our neighbor and ourselves, for it teaches the four cardinal virtues on which all the others hinge, namely, temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude. And so the wise man took her to live with him saying, "She will communicate to me of her good things and will be a comfort in my cares and griefs."

In all this we see how insufficient man is of himself, and yet how, confessing his powerlessness, he can be lifted above his natural weakness and accomplish great things for God! Our Divine Lord is called the Wisdom of the Father, because He is the living and active expression of the Godhead in His humanity. He is the Word telling of the Father's power, His goodness, and His love, His mercy and His justice; and in His own dealings with man He exemplifies all by what He says and does as He moves among them. And as He did, our Lord bids us follow Him, saying, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life," "Learn of me," "Follow me." And to His divine invitation the wise, the good and holy give heed, and with the grace of heavenly wisdom upon them, they

joyfully take up their cross, made up of this world's sorrows, trials, temptations, and manfully set out and follow in the wake of our Saviour.

It is God that draws them after Him, for it is His grace to which they yield, and by being faithful to it, they rise higher and higher on the mount of perfection, and push on farther and farther on the road to eternal life.

Like the rest of mortals they meet with obstacles, but they struggle and with God's help overcome them. And as they advance farther and farther, higher and higher, they begin to realize how sweet the Lord is; how good are all His ways, how just are all His judgments. And whilst they will end in entrancing love, they began their course in salutary fear. For the beginning of wisdom, says the wise man, is the fear of the Lord, but its end is love. How we see this frequently exemplified: A man conscious of the justice of God and the punishments He must inflict upon those violating it will, from fear of divine wrath, keep the law imposed upon him. Sometimes he will wait till he has received signs of the divine displeasure—adversity will cross his path, sickness will cut short his pleasures, death will enter his home and snatch away his loved ones—and then, humiliated, afflicted and cast down, in fear and trembling he comes before his Lord and confesses the divine greatness, and the vanity and nothingness of all created things, and from his very abjection of soul and apprehension lest even worse things overtake him, he will cry out to God

to spare him in His mercy and save him from the sufferings that he is undergoing and which threaten to annihilate him.

Thus afflictions are for many their salvation, for they make them turn to God, whom hitherto they had forsaken, and they begin to keep His law, which before they wantonly broke. It was when reduced to a swineherd that the prodigal returned, and it was when David was humiliated to the dust that he saw the greatness of his sin and turned to the Lord in the bitterness of his soul, exclaiming: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and, according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out my iniquity."

Thus was God's mercy shown David in the very afflictions that He heaped upon him, for, as St. Augustine says, "The greatest grace God can show a sinner, is not to spare him here, that He may spare him eternally." But God is always good, unchangeably good, and His mercy is above all His works. As the poet says—

"God is good when He gives, wise when He denies;
The crosses from His hands are blessings in disguise.

But it takes wisdom to believe this. It is not only the careless that God will lead back to Him betimes through the sorrows that He permits them to experience, but even the good, in His desire to purify them and bring them refined, as it were, through the crucible of affliction to a higher and holier state. And so we read that God afflicts whom He loves, and whom the Lord exalts, let

him prepare himself for affliction, says Holy Writ. And yet wisdom will teach us not to lose heart in God, no matter what He may allot for us. Witness Job's example. He was a good man whom, to prove his worth, the Lord tried most terribly. Land, family, name, all were one after another taken from him, and yet he was resigned and said, "The Lord gave, the Lord took away, blessed be the name of God forever." And though all earthly hopes were shattered, he did not lose hope in heaven, for he said I know my Redeemer liveth. The greatest wisdom after serving God, is never to lose hope in Him. Satan would lead his victims to despair, once they have grievously offended God, but God cheers them in the despondency and misery of their sins and bids them be of good heart; be converted to Him, and go and sin no more. "An humble and contrite heart, O Lord, Thou wilt not despise."

Should not the sinner rejoice at His Lord's magnanimity and hasten to avail himself of it by confessing his sins and promising henceforth to keep His holy law, strengthened and sustained, as we know he will be, by God's all-powerful grace? Let the Christian be ever strong in the love of God, and if perchance he fall, let him rise in his hope and hasten to make reconciliation again with Him, and get back his lost peace of soul, for God is, indeed, a God of mercy; "His mercy is above His justice, His mercy is above all His works."

HOLY FEAR.

THE fear of the Lord is not fear such as we understand it from a human viewpoint. Such a fear excites because of the uncertainty of consequences. The order of nature, for example, is disturbed, and one fears the outcome. In sickness, we fear death; in adventure, we fear failure; in wrong-doing, we fear detection.

And this human fear may even be carried into spiritual things. For example, where a man offends against God's law and fears punishment which may come upon him. This is not the fear which the Holy Scriptures speak of and commend so much. It is merely distrust, based upon the consciousness of the weakness of one's own powers and the uncertainties of what is unknown to us. But spiritual fear is trust and confidence based upon the goodness of God, and which, instead of harrowing the soul, brings peace and comfort to it. Thus saith the Lord, in Ecclesiasticus, first chapter: "The fear of the Lord shall delight the heart, and shall give joy and gladness and length of days; and with him that feareth the Lord it shall go well in the latter end, and in the day of his death he shall be blessed."

It is, therefore, a reverential, not a craven, fear that the Christian feels in his dealings with God: we fear to offend Him because of His infinite goodness and love, like the fear a good son or daughter has of giving pain or sorrow to a loving and devoted parent. The good

citizen fulfills the law, not out of fear, but because he wishes to do what he knows to be right and good for the community's welfare. It is this reverential fear that is the natural fruit of that wisdom which God gives to those wishing it, and who humbly pray and ask it from Him. How one should ever beg of God this holy fear which is the crown of wisdom and which gives us peace in this life and secures for us salvation in the life to come.

Why have not all men this all-saving fear? The answer is readily had: Absence of faith explains it for some cases, and weak faith or inactivity in the exercise of it explains it in others. In a word, it is either disbelief in God on the one hand, or a failure to sufficiently comprehend Him on the other. For the unbeliever we can only pray that he will come to the recognition of his Creator; while for the Christian we must hope and pray that he will remember that God is his infinitely loving Father, Saviour, Sanctifier, and desires to receive him into His everlasting glory and happiness; that God is the best of fathers in the Father, the truest of brothers in the Son, and the most powerful and most generous of friends in the Holy Ghost.

With this recollection strong in the mind no man can offend God. It is only because this is absent that we find Christians breaking the divine law. Thus Ecclesiasticus says: "The fear of the Lord driveth out sin; for he that is without fear, cannot be justified; the wrath of his high spirits (that is his foolish, sinful pride) is his ruin."

How careful men are in their dealings with one another when they have something to gain! What deference an employe shows towards his employer that he may keep in his favor and thus be retained in his employ! Neither is this servile nor unworthy. It is the due acknowledgment of authority on the one hand and the reverence and respect for it on the other. Now, if from a sense of justice and gratitude men pay their due to those on whom they depend and from whom they receive favor and goodness, how much more should all pay their love and reverence to God from whom they have life itself and all good things? And this is what all good men wish to do and strive to do, and God is seconding their good will and helping them by His grace to accomplish it.

Let us ever pray for this holy, salutary fear, and God will give it to us in all abundance. And thus we shall have a right conception of our duty to Him and to our neighbor, and shall show the same by loving and serving Him, and by being good and kind to one another. And thus we shall be noble, for, living godly, we will be God-like. We shall not be slaves, but freemen; free from sin and free from Satan. We shall not be weighed down with craven, cowardly fear, but we shall stand erect, conscious of a noble freedom and a lofty servitude—faithful, loving children of the Father in Heaven, whom to serve is the only real liberty and to love is the only true life.

TRUE FOUNDATION OF PATRIOTISM.

MEN must live, if they would live at all, by faith. That is to say, they must live for something above and beyond themselves, which they have not now, but hope to have one day. Looking backward they recognize a Creator, and looking forward they expect to reach an ultimate happiness. Reason teaches this, and natural faith exists in men more or less according to the quality of the intellect. But grace comes to the aid of nature, and revelation to reason, and throw their light and power athwart men's minds, and give them those clear ideas of their origin and destiny, and the various links between that make up what is known and recognized as Christian faith. It is this faith that the prophets outlined but which Christ fulfilled, and which His teachings inculcate for our practice.

All these divine lessons may be summed up in our duties to God and to our neighbor, and are fulfilled by the law of love and obedience to God and the law of love and respect towards one another; or, if taken together, *love of God* is the summary of the law, for we are told in Holy Writ that we are "to love God for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God." We are to imitate our Divine Lord, our master and our model, and follow Him in all things. His life on earth may be

summed up in honoring and glorifying His Father in heaven, and doing good to men. While recognizing individual rights our Lord acknowledged duties as well, and said, "Give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's"; and the apostle but echoed His sentiments when he bade men obey and respect their rulers, saying, "All authority is from God"—rulers rule in place of God, and are responsible to Him, who will hold them to strictest accountability.

Our Lord did not violate, but respected and obeyed the law under which He lived. It was whilst His blessed mother and foster-father were at "the enrollment" that He was born into life, and it was at the condemnation of a Roman governor, unjust though it was, that He passed out of it. He recognized the will of His Father in all things, and abided by the conditions and circumstances that accompanied it, and so was "faithful unto death—even to the death of the cross." Our rulers are to be honored for the office they hold, and the good they may do through it; for they are intended for the common weal. A God-fearing man makes a good citizen, because he keeps the human law that he break not the divine. Faith, therefore, is the true foundation of patriotism. A Christian faith it is that now upholds it. Christ is the cornerstone of the Church, and the Church is the cornerstone of society. Our faith in Christ begets our faith in the Church sent of Him to preach and teach in His Name.

The Church is the bulwark against anarchy, because it stands up for God, and that which represents Him, law

and order; it is the barrier against Socialism, because it protects the individual in his rights and property. The Church unites all interests, and studies the welfare of all. It inculcates Christ's teaching and example, and so impresses on men love of God and loyalty to the rulers He places over them. Love of country is correlative with love of God in the Christian mind, and piety and patriotism are the ideals held up for Christian practice. True and lasting patriotism can only be found where God is loved and adored; or, in other words, where faith, Christian faith, is known and practiced; for true patriotism must be built up on a higher authority than on that which we behold, on God, therefore; and for a longer existence than that which this world gives us—on eternal life. What ideal citizens will be the members of the Catholic Church, if they but live up to its teachings; and if faithful, what leaven they will be to leaven the whole mass.

It is conscience that must guide and control human acts, and obedience to its voice is insisted upon by the Church, for it recognizes it as God's voice speaking to the soul. Only those who are ruled by conscience can be counted upon to do their duty under all conditions and circumstances. There are those who have natural virtue, and who do much through it, but this will not stand the test of time nor the changes of fortune. Public good will be sacrificed to private interests, and he who lives not for God but himself will serve self rather than serve his country when there is no other alternative.

The world owes a debt of gratitude to the Church for its conservatism, and many noble-minded men acknowledge it.

Let us, the children of the Church, be her glory by our public-spirited, patriotic course in our public life, as we should be her strength and consolation by our private virtues.

To all our fellow-citizens let us give the right hand of fellowship, and stand on the same platform in support of the Constitution, as Carroll did with Washington, and help preserve the Union, as Hughes did with Lincoln; and be ready to defend our flag against any one who would dare to insult it or dim its glories.

BE TRUTHFUL.

TRUTH is the only plane upon which men can deal successfully with one another. If there be not truth and fairness there will be neither justice nor honesty, and all dealing has to come to an end. The poet tells us an "honest man is the noblest work of God." This is truth personified not only in word but in principle, and represents the whole man. How many a character, otherwise pure and spotless, is blemished by the habit of untruthfulness. Some little deceit, some small subterfuge, which could be so easily avoided, if one only made up his mind to be strictly truthful in all things and under all circumstances.

If there be any distinctive American virtue, truth, the love and practice of truth, is that one, coming down from the great Father of His Country, who could not tell a lie. It should be the pride of every true American to keep that record a national heirloom, to pass down to his children's children. Parents should be particular never to tell falsehoods, for their children will learn the habit and practice it against them. They will lose respect for their parents, and will cease to confide in their word. In losing respect, we may say, children lose their parents, and so they will be floated out on the sea of life without that feeling of security which comes with the blessing of parents who are upright and true. How many a young life that has been shipwrecked almost at the start by the blighting winds that followed its unfavorable launching. For confidence leads to a good start, and a good start is half the race. Let the Catholic children find in their parents the highest ideals of truth and honesty.

WASHINGTON.

THE example of Washington is for all, both the ruling and the ruled, one never to be forgotten, and we must hope that we will keep his memory as green and sacred as those who have gone before us. O what power in that name! It is not the name of a tyrant that caused the world to tremble, it is not the name of some great captain who left death and desolation in his train, it is not the

name of some statesman who sought his own more than his country's good, nor is it the name of a great merchant whose enterprise brought him into relations with all the world—it is *simply the name of a man, but a true man*, willing and faithful to carry out the trusts imposed on him in whatever station of life God's providence placed him. His was a character founded on truth, his a wisdom enlightened by virtue, his a strength of will and purpose nerved by a high sense of duty. In the face of such a man all obstacles must give way, because a power greater than his own sustains him and success but waits to crown his efforts. The results but prove that Washington built better than he knew.

Let us, then, pray that his lofty patriotism may be the guiding principle of all his successors, while obedience and respect to their authority on the people's part, be the surest guarantee of perpetual union. And whilst thanking God for having given us a Washington and for the blessings which have followed him for over one hundred years, let us prove our gratitude by fidelity to God and fidelity to one another, whilst we kneel in humble submission before Him as did Washington more than a century ago and ask His blessing on our present greatness and promise of still greater advancement.

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